

Sun (oven) dried tomatoes

Serves several

Takes 8-12 hours

Ingredients

A lot of medium to large tomatoes

Salt

Extra virgin olive oil for preserving



Directions

Pre heat your oven to a low temperature, about gas mark $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$, 100 – 130°C or 225 – 250°F.

Wash the tomatoes, then slice them in half and scoop out the seeds – I find this easiest with a dessert spoon. You want them to be as empty of moisture as possible, so I also pat the insides dry with a bit of kitchen towel.

Place them all cut side up and give them a light sprinkle of salt, then turn them cut side down on a wire rack in a baking tray. Make sure there is plenty of space underneath the wire rack, prop it up if necessary.

Put the trays in the oven, and keep an eye on them, I rotate the trays every hour or so. They are done when they've shriveled up and look like, well, a sun-dried tomato!

IMPORTANT NOTE:

The secret to this process being successful is air. The hot air of the oven needs to be able to access as much of the surface area of the tomatoes as possible. If you try and do this with the tomatoes just laid out on a baking sheet then they won't dry as well. If you have a baking tray with a wire rack in the bottom of it, then prop it up to create a gap with some ramekins or any other oven proof 'stuff' you might have laying around. The oven temperature is also critical, if you turn it up too high then you will roast the tomatoes and that is not what you want to achieve.

Storage:

You can keep these, covered, in the fridge for up to a week. If you'd like to keep them longer, then wash a jar out well and leave it in the oven at Gas Mark 4 (180°C, 350°F) for 5 minutes. Take it out of the oven and once cool, stuff the tomatoes in and top it up with extra virgin olive oil. Tip – the more you squeeze the tomatoes in, the less oil you'll use. Just make sure you get rid of any air gaps by rolling the jar around and tapping the bottom of it.