

tomato and ricotta tortellini with basil

serves 4

This is a recipe from my Hugo's Bondi days. It was on our first menu and actually stayed there for years as our vegetarian main course. It wasn't ordered only by the vegetarians presumably, as it turned out to be one of our best sellers. It's a dish which goes to prove that good food doesn't have to cost an arm and a leg, or take hours to prepare. You can make this even more speedy if you buy oven-roasted tomatoes from the deli, and pre-rolled fresh lasagne sheets if you don't have a pasta machine at home or just can't be bothered.

TOMATO AND RICOTTA FILLING

- 250 g (9 oz/1 cup) ricotta cheese**
- 40 g (1½ oz/¼ cup) semi-dried tomatoes, finely chopped**
- 1 free-range egg yolk**
- 6 basil leaves, finely sliced**
- 1 tablespoon grated Parmigiano Reggiano**
- 1–2 tablespoons tomato juice (if you like)**
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil**

- 8 fresh lasagne sheets or 40 gow gee wrappers**
- 1 free-range egg, lightly beaten**
- 125 g (4½ oz) butter**
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice**
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil**
- 8 basil leaves**
- 8 red basil leaves**
- 14 cherry tomatoes, halved and dried in a very low oven (or use fresh)**
- 1 garlic clove, crushed**
- 1 tablespoon grated Parmigiano Reggiano, plus some to serve**

To make the filling, mix together all the ingredients. Place the lasagne sheets on a bench and cut into 9 cm (3½ inch) squares. Using a pastry brush, wet the edges of each square with beaten egg.

Place 1 tablespoon of filling in the centre of each pasta square and fold over diagonally to make a triangle. Brush a little more egg on two corners of each triangle and twist around your fingers so they come together. Press together to seal.

Cook the tortellini in boiling salted water for about 2 minutes or until cooked through, then lift out with a slotted spoon.

Heat the butter in a frying pan for 2–3 minutes until it turns nut brown. Remove from the heat and add the lemon juice and olive oil. Add the basil, cherry tomatoes, garlic, tortellini and parmesan and toss gently. Serve with some more parmesan over the top.