



All year

SERVES 4 AS A MAIN, OR 6 AS A STARTER // TIME: 2 HOURS 20 MINUTES

GF | DF

Fish soup.

THIS SOUP FEELS LIKE IT COULD CURE ANYTHING.

He is straightforward, direct and well-meaning. You select a fish. His wife guts and cleans it. He wraps it in paper, and you take it home. He is only found if you are in a town near the sea, and only has local fish—the fishmonger.

I like to think he alone is responsible for so many versions of this homely and super-traditional Italian soup. Throughout Italy, if you are anywhere near the sea, you will find a version of this soup on a nonna's table or in a local deli, the best quick meal to go. It's always a little bit different, but always super refreshing, super grounding and so addictive. Plus, it's loaded with nutrients! If you're looking for a more sustainable approach to eating seafood, this technique really helps one fish go a long way. And it works for pretty much any fish you can get. *—Lentil*

Add a very generous splash of oil to a large, heavy-based saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion and sauté for a couple of minutes until beginning to soften. Add the garlic and pepper and sauté for a minute or so until the garlic is beginning to turn golden. Add the potato, parsley stalks and chilli and stir through. Add the wine and boil for about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, place the fish carcass in a muslin bag or wrap in a piece of cheesecloth and fasten with cooking twine. This step saves you having to fish out (no pun intended!) all the tiny bones from the soup after the skeleton falls apart during cooking.

Add the passata to the pan. Rinse the passata bottle with 125 ml (½ cup) of water and add that too. Stir well, then add the fish carcass, making sure it's completely submerged. Cover, reduce to a bare simmer and cook for 2 hours.

After 2 hours, remove the bag and set aside in a bowl to cool. Season the soup to taste, then add the chunks of fish fillet, peas, chopped parsley leaves and lemon juice. Stir through and simmer for 5 minutes.

Once the fish carcass has cooled enough to handle, squeeze out any excess liquid and pick any large pieces of flesh from the bones. Return the liquid and any flesh to the pan and stir through.

Serve the soup hot with a drizzle of oil and the reserved parsley leaves. This is great served with chickpea pancakes (page 218).

extra-virgin olive oil

1 large red onion, diced

5 garlic cloves, crushed

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

3 potatoes, cut into sixths

1 small bunch (40 g) of flat-leaf parsley, stalks separated from leaves, both finely chopped, with some leaves reserved for garnish

½ large hot fresh or dried chilli, finely sliced

500 ml (2 cups) dry white wine

1 x 700 g responsibly sourced whole fish (we used dusky flathead), cleaned and filleted (carcass reserved), fillets deboned if necessary and cut into chunks

700 ml passata

unrefined salt

150 g (1 cup) fresh or frozen peas

juice of 1 lemon

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

muslin bag or cheesecloth and kitchen twine