

Maltagliati with red mullet

Maltagliati is just small triangles of flat pasta that is perfect with this sauce. We first ate this simple but perfect recipe at La Pinetta restaurant on the Tuscan coast. It's a wonderful place rich on the beach serving some of the best seafood we have eaten, the cooking is very traditional and very precise. Luciano, an ex fisherman, chef and patron understands fish in the way we do, when it's all you cook you get to know every quality of every specie. How scorpion fish can make the texture of soups like no other and where to look for the best meat on them behind the gills, how the head of the red mullet releases stickiness when gently poached. It's these small but subtle differences that make a dish taste in a way you can't quite put your finger on. As ever in all the greatest fish restaurants the fish is of the best quality you can imagine and the cooking so simple you couldn't guess how it was cooked, for us it's the finest cooking there is.

Ingredients – serves 4

For the Pasta – 200g 00 flour

6 egg yolks

1 whole red mullet about 300g cleaned and scaled

100ml fish stock made with just a fish head or bone – monkfish or turbot is ideal

1 small dried peperoncini crushed into a tablespoon olive oil

a good pinch of our black olive salt

tablespoon parlsey

4 or five slices of very thin white onion

1 ripe tomatoe

Extra virgin olive oil

Method

Make the pasta by putting the flour on a board and making a well in the centre, add the egg yolks and a dash of olive oil and with the fork incorporate the flour to make a dough, knead it for 10-15 minutes then wrap it and rest it in the fridge for an hour. Roll into thin sheets and cut into small uneven triangles about the size of the palm of your hand. Place on a tray and sprinkle with fine semolina to stop it sticking together.

Make the sauce by adding olive oil to a frying pan and adding the white onion, soften then place the whole fish in the pan and a ladle

of fish stock, add salt then cover and poach the fish, this will take 6-7 minutes, using two spoons fillet the fish in the pan and push the meat off the bones, remove the central bone and any small bones, remove the cheek of the mullet and then remove the head., add a little more stock if needed, boil the sauce so that the oil and stock emulsify, helped by the poaching of the fish in the pan, cook the pasta and add along with a tablespoon of the water, add the tomatoes and a little parsley, taste and season, you wan the sea ! and toss together until the only sauce left is that clinging to the pasta and serve.