

Easy-to-prepare meals and accompanying drinks

# Pissaladière

BY RACHEL WALKER



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THIS SIMPLE BUT SENSATIONAL TART from southern France is a great dish for a summer lunch party, and you only need to remember one thing to guarantee its success: cook the onions slow and low to extract their full juicy, sweet flavour, and you can't go wrong.

## Serves 4

- 2tbsps olive oil
- 3–4 large onions (combined weight, 600g), sliced
- 1tsp salt
- 320g puff pastry
- 50g anchovies, halved lengthways
- 8–12 pitted black olives

## For the tomato salad

- 400–500g tomatoes (look for mixed colours and varieties. Naatora via Ocado have a great selection)
- ½tsp salt
- 1tbsp red wine vinegar
- 3tbsps olive oil
- ½tsp dried oregano

1. Preheat the oven to 200C.
2. Heat the olive oil in a saucepan and then add the sliced onions and salt. Cook on a low heat for a minimum of 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. By then, the onions should become sweet and soft enough that they can be crushed with the back of a wooden spoon—yet no darker than a light, honey colour. [This can be done in advance, and the onions can be refrigerated and covered overnight.]
3. Roll out the puff pastry into a square or a long, thin rectangle. Move it onto a floured baking tray, or one lined with baking paper. Use the tip of a sharp knife to score a



- border, 2cm from the edge—enough to make a mark that's visible, but not cutting through the pastry.
4. Spread out a thick layer of onion within the border, and then lay the anchovies on top to make a diagonal grid. A traditional pissaladière has lines of anchovies stretching from edge to edge; they have a very strong, salty flavour, so for a gentler flavour, make a thin and long pastry shape and use the anchovies to create a line of crosses down the middle. Stud a black olive in the middle of each diamond in the grid, or in the space round the edge of the cross.
5. Put the tart in the hot oven for 25 minutes, resisting the temptation

- to open the oven (it can cause puff pastry to collapse). By the end of cooking, the tart should be puffed and golden.
6. While the pissaladière is cooking, cut the tomatoes into similar sizes. (eg. cut a beef tomato into segments, and just halve cherry or plum tomatoes). Wash, drain in a colander and toss with extra salt to draw moisture out of the tomatoes; leave for 10 minutes.
7. Meanwhile, shake together the red wine vinegar, oil and Dijon mustard in a jam jar. Tip the tomatoes into a serving bowl, toss in the oregano and then the salad dressing. Serve alongside the pissaladière.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TIM & ZOE HILL

# Tasty Rosés

THE DRIFT OF SPRING into summer marks the start of rosé season, and its boom in popularity means that there's more choice than ever.

When it comes to a wine pairing for pissaladière, it's an ideal excuse to immerse yourself in regional flavour and enjoy rosé from Provence. It accounts for 84% of wine production in the area—no surprise when there's such a growing market for it. In 2001, Brits drunk £105,000 worth of Rosé from Provence, but by last year, that figure had shot up to £8.9m.

This is no doubt down to its dry and delicate qualities; Provençal-style rosé is the antithesis to the sweet, headache-inducing rosés of old. It's easy to pair with food, standing up well to the big flavours of local dishes, which are laced with anchovies and olives, as well as the thyme, rosemary



and fennel that make up the famous *Herbes de Provence* blend.

The demand means there's more competition than ever. Mirabeau is made by expat couple Stephan and Jeany Cronk, who have won accolades for their elegant rosé. The Côtes de Provence Rosé in Aldi's Exquisite Collection is a great value option with delicate strawberry notes, and the Corent Côtes d'Auvergne is an exciting entry to The Wine Society range—it's my pick to kick off a summer evening.



## LIFE'S LOOKING ROSÉ

- **Mirabeau, Côtes de Provence Rosé 2015 (13%),** £9.79, Waitrose
- **Corent Côtes d'Auvergne, Saint-Verny 2015 (13.5%),** £7.95, The Wine Society
- **The Exquisite Collection Côtes de Provence Rosé 2015 (12.5%),** £5.99, Aldi



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pudding  
of the  
Month



## Orange Jelly Segments

With sports days in full swing, this riff on a classic half-time snack is a fun thing to pack for a picnic.

### Makes 8 segments

- 2 naval oranges
- 40g caster sugar
- 400ml orange juice
- 4 gelatin sheets

1. Cut both oranges in half and scoop out the filling, using your hands to squeeze the juice into a jug. Rinse the halves of orange and clean away as much pith as you can, as you would prepare a pumpkin.
2. Use shop-bought orange juice to fill up the jug of juice to 400ml. Add the sugar to it and gently heat the orange juice, stirring until the sugar dissolves.
3. Meanwhile, soak the gelatine sheets in cold water for five minutes, until they go soft. Stir them into the warm orange juice.
4. Sit each orange half on a mug or jam jar to make sure they are stable. Fill with the mixture and put in fridge until set. Use a knife to cut each orange half in half again, to make an orange segment. ■

## BOOK



***Is There a Nutmeg in the House?*** by Elizabeth David, £14.99. The latest from the doyenne of French cuisine.

## BUDGET



**Bonne Maman Creme Caramel, Ocado, £2.50 for four.** A cheap and easy way to round off a French-inspired meal.

## BLOW OUT



**Dijon Originale Mustard with white wine,** £35/500g. You can refill your jar at Piccadilly's Maille Boutique.