

SARDINES ON TOAST NEAPOLITAN

SERVES 2

Though this classic dish originated in the ports of southern Italy, we think our West Dorset version more than holds its own – mainly because the sardines we use, plucked straight from the sea in front of The Hive, are so ridiculously fresh. This recipe – more familiar to the older generation than youthful fish-lovers – works well as a snack or a main meal, and is very simple to prepare. And there's plenty of scope for making the tomato sauce your own by altering the amounts of wine and balsamic vinegar. We've found that a certain level of acidity cuts through the oiliness of the sardines quite wonderfully.

INGREDIENTS

Olive oil	Bunch flat-leaf parsley, chopped
1 red onion, diced	100g black olives, pitted
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped	6–8 whole sardines, depending on size
440g good-quality tinned tomatoes	2 thick slices granary bread
Glass red wine	Lemon wedges, to garnish
25ml balsamic vinegar	

- Preheat a hot grill. Put a splash of olive oil into a sauté pan then sweat the red onion and garlic for 2–3 minutes, until soft. Pour in the tomatoes and red wine, and simmer for around 10 minutes. Add the balsamic vinegar, flat-leaf parsley and olives, and simmer for 5 minutes more. Set aside in a warm place.
- While the sauce is cooking, place the sardines onto an oiled and seasoned baking tray. Season the fish and drizzle with olive oil, then grill for 6–8 minutes.
- Toast the granary bread and divide between 2 plates. Pour the sauce over the toasted bread and place the grilled sardines on top. Finish with a sprinkling of flat-leaf parsley and a lemon wedge, and serve while still hot.

