

## Octopus in Red Wine

*Htapothi krasato* (adapted from *A Taste Of The Greek Islands* by Pamela Westland, 1992)  
<http://www.pantrybooks.com/-p-5400.html>



### *Ingredients*

1kg (2.25lb) young octopus  
8 tbsp olive oil  
350g (12oz) small onions or shallots  
150ml (0.25pint) red wine  
6 tbsp red wine vinegar  
225g (8oz) canned tomatoes, roughly chopped  
2 tbsp tomato puree  
4 bay leaves  
2 tsp dried oregano  
black pepper  
2tbsp chopped parsley

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### *Method*

1. First clean the octopus by turning the body inside out and pulling away the entrails and bone-like strips sticking to the sides. Locate the stomach sac, which is about the size of an avocado stone, and cut it away.
2. Wash the octopus well inside and out and then turn the body right side out again. Press the beak and the soft surround out from the centre of the tentacles, cut out and discard.
3. Put the prepared octopus into a shallow casserole dish, pour over some olive oil, cover with a well-fitting lid and cook in a cool oven (150°C/300°F/Gas Mark 2 for 2 hours until very tender.
4. When it is cool enough to handle, place it on a board, cut off the tentacles and cut the body into similar-sized small chunky pieces and put the pieces back into the casserole dish.
5. Add the wine, the vinegar, tomatoes, tomato puree, bay leaves, oregano and very generous grindings of black pepper.
6. Stir well, cover the pan and simmer very gently for 1-1.25 hrs, checking from time to time that the sauce has not dried out. If it does - and this would only happen if the heat were too high - add a little more wine or water. The octopus is cooked when it can be easily pierced with a skewer.
7. The sauce should be thick, like a runny paste. If any of the liquid separates, remove the lid from the pan, slightly increase the heat and stir until some of the liquid evaporates and the sauce thickens.
8. Discard the bay leaves and stir in the parsley. Taste the sauce and adjust the seasoning if necessary.

Serve, if you like, with rice and a salad. A Greek essential is country bread to mop up the sauce

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