

A Cookbook Collection

Bolognese Sauce

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 100g diced smoked pancetta, you could use streaky bacon or lardons here if you don't have pancetta
- 1 medium onion finely diced
- 1 medium carrot finely diced
- 1 stick of celery finely diced
- 2 cloves crushed garlic
- 500g good quality beef mince
- 2 tbsp tomato puree
- Salt & pepper
- 125ml red wine
- 600g tinned chopped tomatoes
- 2 tsp soft dark brown sugar
- 2/3 bay leaves
- 5 tbsp milk
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- Fresh grated nutmeg, approx 1/2 tsp
- Some torn basil leaves

Method:

- Using a wide saucepan or shallow casserole dish, heat the oil over a medium heat. (The wide saucepan will brown the beef faster so that it is not stewing in its own juices) Add the bacon and cook until it starts to become crisp.
- Add the onions and garlic and cook for about another 5 mins so that the onion softens but doesn't brown.
- Add the carrot and celery and cook for a further 5 mins.
- Increase the heat and add the beef. You want the beef to brown quite quickly. Make sure you break up the beef as it cooks so that you don't have any clumps.
- Once the beef is browned, add the tomato puree and mix well. Season with some salt & pepper.
- Add the red wine and cook until it is reduced and the alcohol is burned off.
- Reduce the heat again and add the tinned tomatoes and the brown sugar.
- Once the sauce begins to bubble, reduce to a low heat to allow the sauce to simmer. Add the bay leaves, cover and allow it to cook for 3 hours.
- Check and stir occasionally to make sure the sauce is not drying out.
- Start adding the milk a tablespoon at a time about an hour from the end of cooking time and mix well.
- After 3 hours you should have a lovely rich, thick ragu. Add the balsamic vinegar, nutmeg and torn basil leaves. Remove the bay leaves before dishing up. Season with salt and pepper as needed.
- Serve with spaghetti – or pasta of your choice – and a nice green salad.