



ITALIAN (BOLOGNA)

Ragù alla Bolognese

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Involved	6	25 min	2 hr 30 min	Simmer	Ground beef

Ingredients

- 500 g (1 lb) ground beef, 80/20
- 150 g (5 oz) pancetta, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp butter
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 carrot, finely chopped
- 1 celery stalk, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 120 ml (½ cup) dry white wine
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 400 g (14 oz) canned crushed tomatoes
- 250 ml (1 cup) beef stock
- 120 ml (½ cup) whole milk
- 1 tsp salt, plus more to taste
- Pinch of nutmeg
- 500 g (1 lb) tagliatelle and grated Parmigiano-Reggiano, to serve

Steps

1. Cook the pancetta in the oil and butter in a wide heavy pot over medium heat for 5 minutes, until the fat runs and the pieces turn pale gold.
2. Add the onion, carrot and celery. Cook gently for 10 minutes, stirring, until soft and sweet but not brown. Add the garlic for 1 minute.
3. Turn the heat to medium-high, add the beef and break it into small pieces. Cook for 8 to 10 minutes until all the liquid has evaporated and the meat is lightly browned with no pink left; ground beef is safe at 71°C (160°F), and the long simmer takes it well beyond that.
4. Stir in the tomato paste for 1 minute, then pour in the wine. Let it bubble for 3 minutes until nearly gone.
5. Add the milk and nutmeg and cook for 5 minutes until absorbed. Add the tomatoes, stock and salt.
6. Bring to a bare bubble, then simmer uncovered on the lowest heat for 2 hours, stirring every 15 minutes. Add a splash of water if it looks dry. It is ready when the fat separates and the sauce is thick and glossy.
7. Cook the tagliatelle in well-salted water until just tender, reserving a cup of the water. Toss the pasta with the ragù over low heat for 1 minute, loosening with pasta water.
8. Serve with plenty of Parmigiano.

Notes

- **Make ahead:** the flavour deepens overnight; freeze for up to 3 months.
- **Authentic touch:** Bologna serves ragù with fresh egg pasta or in lasagne, not with spaghetti.
- **Mix it up:** use half ground pork for a softer, sweeter sauce.

- **Slow cooker:** do steps 1 to 5 on the stove, then cook on low 6 to 8 hr or high 4 hr. Prop the lid ajar for the last hour to thicken.
- **Chef's touch:** toss the pasta with the ragù and a knob of cold butter off the heat; it makes the sauce silky.