

Tomato Sauce

2 - 28 oz cans Whole Peeled Tomatoes (cans of peeled Plum or 'Roma'
Tomatoes have the best flavor) [Furmano's 1st, Hunt's 2nd]

3 - 28 oz cans Tomato Puree [Furmano's 1st, Hunt's 2nd]

or for a "heartier sauce" (will not taste different)

2 - 28 oz cans Tomato Puree [Furmano's 1st, Hunt's 2nd] &

1 - 28 oz cans Crushed Tomatoes [Furmano's]

1 - 28 oz can Tomato Sauce [Furmano's 1st, Hunt's 2nd]

1 - 12 oz can Tomato Paste (Hunts)

2 or 3 - Large Vidalia Sweet or Mayan Sweet Onions (3 or 4 if you like onions)

1 - Green Pepper

1 - Red Pepper

1 - Yellow or Orange Pepper (if not available, add another red pepper)

3-4 Teaspoons chopped Garlic (this is the minimum, add more if you like, I do)

Extra Virgin Olive Oil

3 cups Red Wine (Carlo Rossi Vino Paisano)

14 oz (1/2 can) water

1/4 cup Parmigiano Reggiano cheese

1/4 cup Pecorino Romano cheese

1/4 stick butter, cut into patties

Seasonings:

2 - Bay leaves

3-4 Tablespoons Oregano Leaves

3-4 Tablespoons Basil Leaves

1-2 Tablespoons Parsley Flakes

3-4 Tablespoons Italian Seasoning (McCormick)

Pinch of Salt

1-2 Teaspoons Fresh Ground Pepper

1-2 good shakes Crushed Red Pepper (to taste)

3-4 Tablespoons sugar

- If you are going to make meatballs to go with your sauce, **make them first and get them into the oven before starting your sauce**
- Cut onions into medium sized strips ~ remove onion hearts & outer one or two layers of onion skin since they will be "sour"
- Dice peppers in ~ 1" chunks
- Pre-heat enough Extra Virgin Olive Oil to thoroughly coat the bottom of your sauce pan
- Start with cooking onions over medium heat
- After a minute or two toss in the peppers
- Once the onions turn translucent (don't let them cook much past the time they start to **slightly** brown), add the garlic and cook for a minute or two being careful not to burn the garlic
- Add two cups of red wine, all Bay leaves, 2 Tablespoons Oregano Leaves, 2 Tablespoons Basil Leaves, 1 Tablespoons Parsley Flakes, 2 Tablespoons Italian Seasoning, pinch of Salt, 1 Teaspoon Fresh Ground Pepper, 1 shake Crushed Red Pepper
 - Reduce heat a bit and allow mixture to cook for a couple of minutes, stir often
- Add 1 can Tomato Puree, allow to cook for a couple of minutes, stir often
- Pour all cans Whole Tomatoes into a bowl and crush gently to open tomatoes

Tomato Sauce, Meatballs, & Portabella Mushrooms

- Add rest of Tomato Puree, can of Crushed Tomatoes (if using), “gently crushed” Whole Tomatoes, all cans Tomato Sauce
- Spoon in Tomato Paste using teaspoon
 - Allow mixture to cook for a couple of minutes, stir often
- Using wine and water, "rinse" out cans (not paste can) and add the “tomato” fluids into to your sauce
- Increase heat a bit and **Slowly** bring mixture to a slow boil, stir often and be careful **not to burn** the sauce
- Immediately reduce heat (if possible, also change burners on stove top) and simmer for ~ 2 hours, slightly covered; and **stir often**
 - **If you are adding meat, meatballs, and mushrooms**, you would add them at this time (once the boiling has stopped so you don't get burned) – remember to stir carefully if you add meatballs to your sauce so they don't break open
 - After about 1 hour (of the 2), add 3 Tablespoons sugar, allow to simmer and continue to stir often
 - After another 1/2 hour, add 1 Tablespoon Oregano Leaves, 1 Tablespoon Basil Leaves, 1 Tablespoons Parsley Flakes, 1 Tablespoon Italian Seasoning, stirring well
 - Continue to simmer and stir often
- After about 2 or 2 1/2 hours or simmering, taste the sauce by taking a small amount and allow to cool a bit, then taste
 - If necessary, add a bit more sugar if the sauce is bitter
 - Add 1 Teaspoon Oregano Leaves, 1 Teaspoon Basil Leaves as necessary - I always add a bit more Basil than this, maybe ~ 2 more Teaspoons of Basil
 - If necessary, add a shake (or two) of Crushed Red Pepper to taste
- Simmer for another 1/2 to 1 hour, and reduce heat as low as you can (low simmer)
 - Add butter and cheese, stir well
- Be careful with your flame setting, **do not burn** your sauce
- Assuming you are making the sauce at least the day before you need it (for the **best** taste), after about 3 1/2 or 4 hours simmering you would turn off the heat and allow the pot to cool before refrigerating over night, otherwise keep the heat as low as possible (low simmer) and stir often
- If **reheating**, put the lightly covered pot on simmer and allow to heat for at least a 3-4 hours before serving (should bubble slightly); stir often after the pot warms up. As above, be careful with your flame setting, **do not burn** your sauce

Besides meatballs, this recipe is very good with other meats such as browned sausage, browned, and diced steak, or just good quality ground beef browned with a bit of chopped onions and chopped garlic. For an interesting twist, add a box of frozen peas during the last hour of simmering (on a two day cook cycle this would be on the second day, during the last hour of simmering before serving) or Portabella Mushrooms as shown below. I personally do not use the tomato products from CONTADINA (the paste is OK), they seem to be a bit more acidic and will require you to use much more sugar than is necessary.

Meat Balls

2 lbs Ground Beef (at least 90% lean ~
I like to use 1 lb of 90% lean and 1 lb 85% lean Angus beef)
1 cup Progresso Italian Seasoned Bread Crumbs
½ cup skim milk
Pinch of salt
1-Teaspoon Fresh Ground Pepper
1-Teaspoon Basil Leaves
1-Teaspoon Parsley Flakes
1-Teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
3 Large Eggs
1-2 Teaspoons chopped Garlic (this is the minimum, add more if you like)
1 Large Vidalia Sweet or Mayan Sweet Onion (need about ½ cup total)
1/8 cup Parmigiano Reggiano cheese
1/8 cup Pecorino Romano cheese
Couple good dashes of Extra Virgin Olive Oil

- Finely chop onions ~ remove onion hearts & outer one or two layers of onion skin since they will be "sour"
- Thoroughly mix all ingredients in a large bowl
 - The mixture should be somewhat dry, but sticky, add additional bread crumbs or olive oil as necessary for texture
- Lightly grease a baking pan with either Crisco or Olive oil (olive oil will smoke though)
- Shape mixture into meatballs ~ 1 ½ " ~ 2 ½ " in diameter, place on pan
- Bake uncovered in pre-heated 325 oven for about 25~35 minutes (until they start to brown and the cheese oozes out)
- Do not allow to cool before adding to your sauce

One recipe should make about 12~16 meatballs depending on size and is a good amount to add to one pot of sauce. You can cut the meatball recipe in half [for half the number of meatballs], although you should use 2 large eggs for half a recipe. Making [1 1/2] recipes (about ~3 lbs of meat) is about the most you can add to one pot of sauce without overflowing the pot; you can always split the sauce into two pots to make more meatballs. Using 1 1/2 lb beef with 1/2 lb pork has a nice flavor you may enjoy as a change from all beef meatballs.

Portabella Mushrooms

1/2 to 1 1/2 lb Portabella Mushrooms (to taste), pre-sliced are OK if **fresh**

Pinch of Kosher Salt

Fresh Ground Pepper

Extra Virgin Olive Oil

- If necessary, clean and slice mushrooms into strips
- Evenly spread (one layer thick, do not overlap) on backing pan
- Season with salt, pepper, and Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Bake uncovered in pre-heated 325 oven for about 15-20 minutes (they will start to darken)
- Do not allow to cool before adding to your sauce (you can cook these at the same time as your meatballs and then them to your sauce at the same time as you would the meatballs)