

Sunday Sauce and Meatballs

★★★★★
4.16 from 45 votes

Prep Time

45 mins

Cook Time

3 hrs

Total Time

2 hrs 5 mins

If it's Sunday, it's time for Sunday sauce and meatballs. This low and slow simmered tomato sauce yields the most tender meatballs and will make your house smell like home.

Course: Dinner, Main Course

Cuisine: Italian

Keyword: meatballs, sunday sauce

Servings: 12 servings

Calories: 345 kcal

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Ingredients

Sunday Sauce

- 2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 small green bell pepper, seeded and finely diced
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, finely diced
- 1 6 oz can tomato paste
- 1 28 oz can crushed tomatoes
- 1 28 oz can tomato puree
- 1/2 cup dry red wine
- 3/4 cup parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 Tbsp granulated sugar
- 2 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp black pepper, freshly ground
- 1 Tbsp Italian seasoning, dried
- 1 Tbsp fresh basil, chopped
- 1 Tbsp fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 tsp fresh oregano, chopped (1 tsp dried can be substituted in you can't find fresh)
- salt and pepper to taste

Meatballs

- 3 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil, divided
- 1/2 small green bell pepper, seeded and finely diced
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 garlic clove, finely diced
- 1 lb ground beef, 80/20 meat:fat ratio
- 1 lb ground beef/veal/pork mix, ground beef can be substituted
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 3/4 cups bread crumbs
- 1/2 cup whole milk
- 1/3 cup parmesan cheese, grated
- 2 tsp dried Italian seasoning
- 1 Tbsp fresh basil, chopped
- 1 Tbsp fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tsp fresh oregano, chopped (1/2 tsp dried can be substituted in you can't find fresh)
- 2 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper

Instructions

Sunday Sauce

- Heat olive oil over med/high heat in a dutch oven or large heavy bottomed pot.
- Add bell pepper and onion and saute until translucent and just beginning to brown, about 3-4 mins.
- Stir in garlic and continue to cook 2 more minutes.
- Add tomato paste, then fill the can with water and add water. Stir until well blended.
- Add crushed tomatoes and tomato puree, then fill with 1 1/2 cans of water and add water. Stir well.
- Pour in wine, add cheese and sugar. Stir well.
- Add salt, pepper, Italian seasoning, basil, parsley and oregano.
- Season with additional salt and pepper to taste.

- Reduce heat to low until the sauce is just barely simmering.

Meatballs

- Heat 1 Tbsp olive oil over med/high heat in small pan.
- Add bell pepper and onion and saute until translucent and just beginning to brown, about 3-4 mins.
- Stir in garlic and continue to cook 2 more minutes.
- Remove from heat and let mixture cool to room temperature.
- Combine remaining ingredients in large bowl, add in pepper/onion/garlic mixture.
- Mix (I use my hands) until everything is combined, being careful not to over-mix!
- Form into balls, about 24. Again, don't over-handle or the meatballs will become tough.
- Heat remaining 2 Tbsp olive oil over med/high in large non-stick frying pan.
- Cook meatballs in 2-3 batches, being careful not to overcrowd the pan.
- Brown meatballs on all sides, turning frequently so they don't burn. Reduce heat if necessary.
- Add browned meatballs directly into sauce. They will continue to cook in the sauce.
- Cook sauce and meatballs uncovered at a very low simmer, stirring occasionally for at least 2 hours (can simmer for hours on the stove).
- Serve over pasta.

Recipe Notes

Yields about 25 meatballs.

- To save time, you can saute the onions, peppers, and garlic for the sauce and meatballs together. Remove the sautéed onion/pepper/garlic combo for the meatballs and set aside to cool.
- Low and slow are the magic words for this sauce. The longer it cooks, the better it tastes. Adjust the heat to very low so the sauce is just simmering as it cooks.
- Stir the sauce frequently, being sure to always mix from the bottom.
- When combining the ingredients for the meatballs, I find that mixing them with my hands works best. Be careful not to overmix!
- Brown the meatballs over medium heat and rotate them frequently so they don't burn. If you burn a meatball, DO NOT add it to the sauce. The burnt flavor will permeate the sauce and it will be ruined.
- This sauce tastes even better the next day (if you have leftovers)!

Nutrition Facts	
Sunday Sauce and Meatballs	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 345	Calories from Fat 207
% Daily Value*	
Fat 23g	35%
Saturated Fat 7g	44%
Cholesterol 89mg	30%
Sodium 1143mg	50%
Potassium 349mg	10%
Carbohydrates 13g	4%
Fiber 1g	4%
Sugar 4g	4%
Protein 21g	42%
Vitamin A 475IU	10%
Vitamin C 13.6mg	16%
Calcium 161mg	16%
Iron 3mg	17%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2000 calorie diet.	