

Italian Sausage & Beef Ragu

Recipe video above. Cooked long and slow but super easy, this is a pasta done seriously right, the real proper Italian way with incredible extra richness and flavour from the Italian sausages. Make this on the stove or in your slow cooker!

Prep Time	Cook Time	Total Time
15 mins	3 hrs	3 hrs 15 mins

Course: Dinner, Pasta Cuisine: Italian Keyword: Italian beef sausage ragu
 Servings: 8 -10 Calories: 361kcal Author: Nagi | RecipeTin Eats



★★★★★
 5 from 23 votes

Ingredients

Ragu

- 3 tbsp olive oil , separated
- 1 lb / 500g ground beef (mince) (not lean)
- 0.8 lb / 400g Italian pork sausages , meat removed from casings (Note 1)
- 3 garlic cloves , minced
- 1 large onion , finely chopped (brown or white) (Note 2)
- 1 carrot , finely chopped or shredded (Note 2)
- 1 large stalk of celery , finely chopped (Note 2)
- 1 tsp each dried thyme leaves and dried rosemary
- 1 cup red wine (Note 3)
- 2 cups beef broth / stock
- 3 tbsp tomato paste
- 28 oz / 800 g can crushed tomatoes (Note 4)
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tsp salt
- Black pepper

To serve (serves 3) (Note 5)

- 8 oz / 250 g pasta of choice (I used pappardelle, the wide pasta pictured in the photos)
- Parmigiano-Reggiano , freshly grated

Instructions

1. Heat 1 1/2 tbsp oil over high heat in a large heavy based pot. Add the beef and sausage. Cook, breaking it up as you go, until browned. Use a slotted spoon to remove into a bowl.
2. Heat remaining 1 1/2 tbsp oil in the pot and reduce heat to medium low. Add garlic, onion, carrot and celery. Saute gently for 8 to 10 minutes, until the onion is translucent.
3. Add cooked meat back into the pot along with the remaining Ragu ingredients. Turn heat up and mix to combine. Bring to simmer, then turn the heat down so it is bubbling gently (refer to the video, at 50 seconds). Cover and cook for 2 1/2 hours, stirring once or twice.
4. Remove from heat and remove the lid. The amount of liquid reduces as it cools, you will be surprised, so don't be tempted to return it to the stove without the lid! :)

5. SLOW COOKER: At step 3, transfer everything into a slow cooker and cook on low for 6 to 8 hours, and cook the last 30 minutes or so with the lid off the reduce.

To Serve

1. Bring a very large pot of salted water to a rapid boil. Add pasta and cook until just al dente - cooked but still quite firm (I usually go for 2 minutes less than cook time per packet).
2. Meanwhile, heat a large, deep fry pan over medium high heat. Add about 2 1/2 cups of ragu, bring to simmer.
3. Use tongs to transfer pasta straight from the pot to the fry pan PLUS 1/2 cup of pasta cooking water.
4. Toss gently (I use 2 wooden spatulas) for 1 minute or until the sauce reduces, by which time the sauce will thicken, be glossy, and stick to the pasta.
5. Serve immediately, garnished with Parmigiano-Reggiano if using!

Notes

1. The Italian pork sausages are key to the incredible flavour and richness in this recipe. So please don't think of substituting this with the cheap BBQ sausages (the ones that are an even pink colour), please make sure you get chunky Italian sausages. By "chunky", I mean the sausages where you can see chunks of white fat in the sausages so you know it's made with real meat, not with fillers (like the cheap sausages are).

Italian sausages are loaded with fab seasonings. The classic usually has fennel in it, but you can use any Italian sausages you want. I used Chili & Garlic ones once and they were fab!

See the sausages I use in the video.

2. The onion, carrot and celery is a holy trinity referred to as Soffitto. Use a 2:1:1 ratio i.e. The amount of carrots and celery should each be 1/2 the amount of onion. Or put another way, when you combine the carrots and celery, it should be about the same amount as the onion.

3. Wine - Use a good value full bodied red wine, like cabaret sauvignon or merlot. Shiraz is ok too. No need to use expensive wine for slow cooked recipes like this (and the New York Times agrees). Use discount end of bin specials (I get mine from Dan Murphey's). Pinots not suitable, too light.

99.5% of the alcohol in the red wine evaporates during cooking. The sauce does not taste winey at all, it completely transforms.

If you can't consume alcohol, you can substitute with non alcoholic red wine or (next best substitute) more beef stock.

4. Sugar - Better quality (i.e.: more expensive) canned tomatoes tend to be sweeter. So if you feel the sauce is a bit sour, just add a bit of sugar (white or brown), 1 tsp at a time until the sauce is to your taste.

5. Amount of pasta to use - As a rule of thumb: 2.5oz/80g dried pasta per person + 3/4 cup of ragu per person. To make this for 1 to 3 people, use 1/2 cup of pasta cooking water, for 4 to 5 people, use 3/4 cup.

6. Servings / storage- This makes loads. :-). Enough for 8 to 10 people, and it freezes brilliantly. Once it cools, it would also be fabulous to use for lasagna!

7. Nutrition for ragu sauce only (excludes pasta)**Nutrition**

Calories: 361kcal | Carbohydrates: 11g | Protein: 24g | Fat: 21g | Saturated Fat: 6g | Cholesterol: 74mg
| Sodium: 950mg | Potassium: 914mg | Fiber: 2g | Sugar: 6g | Vitamin A: 1640IU | Vitamin C: 12.9mg |
Calcium: 58mg | Iron: 3.7mg

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