**Classic Spaghetti and Meatballs**

Contributed by [Melissa Rubel Jacobson](http://www.foodandwine.com/chefs/melissa-rubel-jacobson)

* ACTIVE: 45 MIN
* TOTAL TIME: 1 HR 45 MIN
* SERVINGS: 6
* •MAKE-AHEAD

Spaghetti and meatballs is a crowd-pleasing [classic Italian-American](http://www.foodandwine.com/slideshows/italian-american-classics) dish. The mixture of beef, veal and pork makes the meatballs really flavorful.

**INGREDIENTS:**

1. 2 slices white sandwich bread, torn into small pieces
2. 1/4 cup whole milk
3. 1 pound ground beef chuck
4. 1/2 pound ground veal
5. 1/2 pound ground pork
6. 2 tablespoons freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, plus more for serving
7. 1 1/2 tablespoons minced garlic
8. Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
9. 3 tablespoons chopped basil, plus 1 large basil sprig
10. 1 teaspoon chopped oregano
11. Two 28-ounce cans whole tomatoes
12. 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
13. Pinch of crushed red pepper
14. 1 1/2 pounds spaghetti

**DIRECTIONS:**

1. In a small bowl, soak the bread in the milk until the milk is absorbed, about 5 minutes. In a large bowl, gently mix the ground meats with the soaked bread, 2 tablespoons Parmigiano-Reggiano, 1/2 tablespoon of the garlic, 2 teaspoons salt, 1/4 teaspoon pepper, 1 tablespoon of the chopped basil and the oregano. Form the meat mixture into golf ball–size meatballs and transfer to a baking sheet. Cover and refrigerate until chilled, about 30 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, in a food processor, pulse the tomatoes with their juices until finely chopped. In a large saucepan, heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon minced garlic and cook over moderate heat until light golden, about 3 minutes. Add the crushed red pepper, chopped tomatoes and the basil sprig. Bring to a simmer and cook over moderately low heat until the sauce is slightly thickened, about 25 minutes. Discard the basil sprig and season the sauce with salt and pepper.
3. In a large skillet, heat the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Brown the meatballs in batches, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer the meatballs to the tomato sauce and simmer until cooked through, about 10 minutes. Discard the fat from the skillet. Add 1/4 cup of water and cook over moderately high heat, scraping up the brown bits from the bottom of the pan, about 2 minutes. Pour the water into the tomato sauce.
4. In a large pot of salted boiling water, cook the spaghetti until al dente. Drain and return the pasta to the pot. Pour in 2 cups of the tomato sauce and toss until the pasta is well coated, about 1 minute. Transfer the pasta to large shallow bowls. Spoon the meatballs and remaining tomato sauce over the spaghetti. Sprinkle with the remaining 2 tablespoons chopped basil. Serve at once, passing grated cheese at the table.

Make Ahead The meatballs and sauce can be cooked up to 2 days in advance. Reheat gently before serving.