

# Sunday Sauce alla Russo

Adapted slightly from Eleanora's Kitchen, by Eleanora Russo Scarpetta



An old-world kind of Bolognese sauce, but it's actually Italian-American.

## SAUCE:

- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, halved
- 1/4 pound pancetta, or Canadian bacon
- 5 cloves garlic, put through a garlic press
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 96 ounces canned plum tomatoes, with juice, pureed in blender for 3-5 seconds only (3 large cans)
- 32 ounces tomato puree, canned
- 6 large fresh basil leaves
- 3/4 pound Italian sausage, sweet (not hot)
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano, [added during last 15 minutes] my addition
- 1/2 tablespoon Italian seasoning, [added during last 15 minutes] my addition

## THE MEAT:

- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3 whole garlic cloves, cracked (peeled and lightly smashed)
- 3/4 pound spareribs, or country ribs with bones
- 1/2 cup dry white wine

## BEEF BRACIOLE:

- 18 ounces cube steaks, or thin round steaks, cut into 2 pieces

- 2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 whole garlic clove, finely minced
- 2 teaspoons Italian parsley, minced
- 2 tablespoons Pecorino Romano cheese, freshly grated

Freshly ground black pepper to taste

## MEATBALLS:

- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup Pecorino Romano cheese, grated
- 2 tablespoons Italian parsley, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

## Servings: 12

We ended up adding the Italian sausage to the meatballs - it never made it into the meat sauce. So IF you decide to just make meatballs, do add some Italian sausage to it (not shown in the recipe that way). Also, be sure you don't cook the braciole more than 1 1/4 hours or they will become dry and tasteless. And, to be efficient, you're going to need 10 garlic cloves: 5 pressed through a garlic press, 2 finely chopped, and 3 mostly whole (cracked).

- 1. SAUCE:** In a large heavy-duty pan warm 1/4 cup olive oil over medium heat. Add onion halves, pancetta (all in one piece), pressed garlic and 1/2 tsp salt and cook, stirring for about 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes, the tomato puree, fresh basil and simmer, partially covered, for 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. Discard the onion halves.
- 2. BRACIOLE:** Place the cube steaks on a work surface (plastic cutting board). Pound the steak with a meat pounder for 2-3 minutes. Sprinkle each steak with a teaspoon of olive oil, garlic, parsley and Pecorino cheese. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Working with one steak at a time, roll tightly into a log shape and tie with kitchen twine.
- 3. MEATS:** Heat the remaining 1/4 cup oil in a large (wide) cast-iron skillet, if possible, over medium heat. Add the cracked garlic and cook for 2 minutes (do not burn). Add the braciole, sausage and ribs to the skillet and cook, uncovered, until the meats are golden brown all over, about 8-10 minutes, turning as needed. Add the white wine and cook for 2 more minutes. Remove the browned meats from the pan and add them to the sauce, along with the meatballs (directions below).
- 4.** Add 2 cups water to the sauce and return to a simmer. Cook, partially covered, stirring occasionally, over medium heat for 1 1/4 hours (DO NOT COOK ANY LONGER). During last 15 minutes, add the oregano and Italian seasoning (crush it between your palms to open up the oils).
- 5. PASTA:** Just before the sauce is done, bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook according to package directions, until al dente (still a little bite to the pasta). Drain, then transfer to a large (HOT) serving platter. Serve the pasta with meat sauce, sprinkle with Pecorino Romano cheese and serve immediately.
- 6. MEATBALLS:** In a large mixing bowl beat the eggs, then add cheese, parsley and black pepper. Add the beef, pork, veal, garlic, oil and salt. Mix to combine.
- 7.** Hold the bread under running water for about 1-2 seconds only, then squeeze out all the water. Tear the bread (it's a kind of mush at this point) into very small pieces and add to meatball mixture along with the bread crumbs. Mix well.
- 8.** With damp hands, working with 1/4 cup of meat at a time, form into meatballs and set on a baking sheet (rimmed). Do not allow meatballs to touch one another.
- 9.** Preheat oven to 350°.
- 10.** Bake meatballs for 20 minutes; turn them over and bake another 20 minutes. Drain and add them to the sauce mixture above.

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Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 1057 Calories; 62g Fat (53.4% calories from fat); 54g Protein; 68g Carbohydrate; 6g Dietary Fiber; 207mg Cholesterol; 1560mg Sodium. Exchanges: 3 Grain(Starch); 6 Lean Meat; 3 1/2 Vegetable; 8 1/2 Fat.

1 1/2 pounds ground sirloin  
3/4 pound ground pork  
3/4 pound ground veal, or use more ground pork  
2 whole garlic cloves, finely chopped  
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 slice white bread (or Italian bread)  
3/4 cup dry bread crumbs  
1/2 cup light olive oil (i.e. not extra virgin)

PASTA:

1 1/2 pounds pasta (your choice - we used linguine)

*Serving Ideas: In the traditional fashion the sauce would be served as a first course over pasta, then the meats, bracirole, ribs and meatballs would be served as a second course with salad, bread, wine and fruit for dessert. You can use any kind of pasta. Leftovers can be made into lasagna, stuffed shells, manicotti, ravioli or baked ziti.*

Carolyn T's Blog - Tasting Spoons:  
<http://tastingspoons.com>