

Rigatoni with Bolognese

Rigatoni with Bolognese Sauce

Makes 8 servings

The easy way is to cook rigatoni in a pot of boiling water following box directions, then drain and mix with a large jar of ready-made Bolognese Sauce. Dinner is ready in under twenty minutes.

Who are we kidding? Where's the fun in that? Here's the real way to make a Bolognese Sauce, from instructions I had from Marcella Hazan. \\\

Now that is cooking.

Marcella Hazan inspired Bolognese Sauce

Makes 2 cups



1 tablespoon olive oil

3 tablespoons butter plus 1 tablespoon for tossing pasta

1/2 cup finely chopped onion

2/3 cup finely chopped celery

2/3 cup finely chopped carrot

1 pound ground beef OR Italian sweet sausage

Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 cup whole milk

pinch of freshly grated nutmeg

1 cup dry white wine

1 1/2 cups canned imported Italian plum tomatoes, cut up, with their juice

1 pound dry rigatoni pasta cooked until tender, 10 minutes in a pot of boiling water, then drained

freshly grated parmigiano-reggiano cheese at the table

1. Put the oil, butter and onion in the pot and turn the heat on to medium. Cook and stir the onion until it has become translucent, then add the chopped celery and carrot. Cook for about 2 minutes, stirring the vegetables to coat them well.

2. Add ground beef, a large pinch of salt and a few grindings of pepper. Crumble the meat with a fork, stir well and cook until the beef has lost its raw, red color.
3. Add milk and let it simmer gently, stirring frequently, until it has bubbled away completely. Add a tiny grating - about 1/8 teaspoon - of nutmeg and stir.
4. Add the wine, let it simmer until it has evaporated, then add the tomatoes and stir thoroughly to coat all ingredients well. When the tomatoes begin to bubble, turn the heat down so that the sauce cooks at the laziest of simmers, with just an intermittent bubble breaking through to the surface. Cook, uncovered, for 3 hours or more, stirring from time to time. While the sauce is cooking, you are likely to find it begins to dry out and the fat separates from the meat. To keep it from sticking, add 1/2 cup of water whenever necessary. At the end, however, no water at all must be left and the fat must separate from the sauce. Taste and correct for salt and pepper
5. Toss with cooked, drained pasta, adding the remaining tablespoon of butter and serve with freshly grated parmesan on the side.