

Sunday Sauce with meatballs, ribs & Italian sausage

This sauce is the perfect recipe to make ahead because it actually tastes better the longer it sits.

Makes 16 servings
(10 cups sauce + meats)
Total time: 4½ hours

FOR THE SAUCE, MINCE:

- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- 4 cloves garlic

SEAR:

- 1 slab baby back ribs, cut into 2-rib sections, seasoned with salt and black pepper (about 2½ lb.)
- 2 Tbsp. canola oil

ADD:

- 2 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 2 tsp. dried Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp. red pepper flakes
- ½ cup dry red wine, divided (such as Chianti)
- 2 cans crushed tomatoes (28 oz. each)
- 2 cans tomato purée (15 oz. each)
- 1 dried bay leaf
- 1 Parmesan rind (3-inch)

FOR THE MEATBALLS, WHISK:

- ½ cup fresh bread crumbs
- ½ cup grated Parmesan
- ¼ cup whole milk
- 2 eggs
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 2 tsp. dried Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- ½ tsp. red pepper flakes
- 12 oz. ground chuck
- 12 oz. ground pork

SEAR:

- 2 Tbsp. canola oil
- 19 oz. hot or sweet Italian sausage links (such as Johnsonville)

For the sauce, mince onion, carrots, and garlic cloves in a food processor; set aside.

Sear ribs in 2 Tbsp. oil in a 7¼ qt. Dutch oven or large pot over medium-high heat until browned on both sides, 7–10 minutes; transfer to a platter.

Add onion mixture, tomato paste, 2 tsp. Italian seasoning, and 1 tsp. pepper flakes to the Dutch oven, season with salt and black pepper, and cook until the onion softens, about 3 minutes.

Deglaze Dutch oven with ¼ cup wine, scraping up any browned bits; cook until nearly evaporated, 2 minutes. Stir in crushed tomatoes, tomato purée, bay leaf, and Parmesan rind. Bring sauce to a boil, add ribs, and cover. Reduce heat to low and simmer 3 hours.

For the meatballs, whisk together bread crumbs, grated Parmesan, milk, eggs, minced garlic, 2 tsp. Italian seasoning, 1 tsp. salt, ½ tsp. black pepper, and ½ tsp. pepper flakes. Gently combine with ground chuck and pork. Divide and shape meat mixture into about ten 3-oz. meatballs; cover and chill until ready to cook.

Sear sausages in 2 Tbsp. oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until browned on both sides, 5 minutes; transfer to a plate. Sear meatballs in drippings in same skillet until browned, 5 minutes; transfer to plate with sausages.

Deglaze skillet with remaining ¼ cup wine, scraping up any browned bits and cooking until nearly evaporated. Add sausages, meatballs, and reduced wine to the Dutch oven.

Simmer sauce until rib meat is falling off the bones and an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the sausages and meatballs registers 165°, about 1 hour more.

Per serving: 533 cal; 38g total fat (15g sat); 126mg chol; 763mg sodium; 16g carb; 3g fiber; 29g protein



When minced, the small particles of onion, carrot, and garlic really break down and melt right into the sauce.



Remove the thin membrane found on the underside of ribs. It becomes tough when cooked.



A Parmesan rind adds tons of flavor, but since it doesn't melt, it should be removed before serving.