

TOMATO SAUCE with MEATBALLS

Ingredients (approximate quantities, serves 8):

Extra-virgin olive oil

1 c. chopped onion

1/2 c. chopped carrot

1/2 c. chopped celery

1 6 oz can tomato paste

1 pt (2 c.) water

1 qt concentrated tomatoes

1 lb. high-quality ground beef (or beef, veal, pork mixture)

3 eggs

1 c. unseasoned bread crumbs

1 tsp. kosher salt

1 tsp. fresh ground black pepper

Fresh basil (or parsley, or other herb) to taste (lots)

1. In a large heavy saucepan, cook onion, carrot and celery in oil over medium heat until wilted and fragrant, about 5 minutes.

2. Add tomato paste, mix well, combine water, stirring until smooth.

3. Add whole tomatoes, stir well.

4. Cook covered but with lid slightly ajar, stirring frequently, about 5-10 minutes, until thoroughly heated and slow boil (but do not burn).

5. Meanwhile, combine meat, eggs, bread crumbs, salt and pepper. Mix well, adding more bread crumbs if mixture is too liquidy. Mixture should have a firm consistency and be nearly dry and easy to handle.

6. Form meatballs by successive division of meat mixture, approx 6 levels of division to 64 meatballs, more or less according to desired size.

Note: meatballs will expand upon cooking.

7. Add meatballs serially to bubbling sauce, stir, allow to return to boil, then reduce heat to simmer.

8. Cook meatballs 20-30 minutes at simmer, stirring frequently.

9. Remove heat, add basil, stir to combine.

Serve over pasta with grated parmesan cheese. Enjoy!

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