

Rigatoni al Forno/Baked Rigatoni with Besciamella and Meat Sauce

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS

- * 1 pound rigatoni pasta
- * 1/4 cup butter, cubed
- * Half recipe Salsa besciamella/Béchamel Sauce (see below)
- * Half recipe Ragù alla Bolognese (see below)
- * 1 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat home [oven](#) to 375 degrees, or heat [Rotator](#) to 800F degrees.
2. Cook the pasta according to package directions, until very al dente (about 3 minutes less than if you were serving immediately). Drain.
3. Grease a deep 9x13-inch baking dish (we used 8 – single serving cast iron skillet with the [Rotator](#)) with 1 cube of butter and spread a layer of the besciamella sauce on the bottom.
4. Add a layer of rigatoni over the sauce, then a layer of ragù Bolognese, and a few tablespoons of cheese. Continue layering until all of the pasta and sauce are used up.
5. Sprinkle the remaining cheese on the top, dot with remaining butter cubes, and place in the oven. Bake for 20-30 minutes (we only needed 1 60-second rotation and 1 -30 second rotation – just 1-minute ½ are needed in The Rotator [pizza oven](#)) until golden. Allow to cool for a few minutes and slice into large squares to serve.

TIP:

Baked dishes can be assembled the night before and baked the morning of serving so they have time to set up. If you are serving this as a first course, you need an equally filling second course that does not have too much sauce, such as roasted meat or fried meatballs.

Pair this dish with a bottle of *Tramonti Rosso* or similar. A mix of the ancient Aglianico, Tintore, and Piediroso vines and a unique terroir create fruity and Mediterranean notes with a fresh, tannic, warm, and spicy sip.

NOTE:

These types of dishes are synonymous with Sundays and special occasions in Italy, although, if served on a Wednesday night, that would make it a celebration, too!

VARY IT!

You can use just one of the sauces in larger amounts, or swap out the rigatoni for ziti or penne if you like in this filling dish. Some people like to layer their baked pasta dishes with vegetables or sliced hard-boiled eggs as well.

Ragù alla Bolognese/Bolognese-Style Meat Sauce

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOK TIME: 3-4 HOURS

YIELD: 6 SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS

- * 2 tablespoons Amy Riolo Selections or other good-quality extra virgin olive oil
- * 2 tablespoons butter
- * 1/4 cup diced yellow onion
- * 1/4 cup diced celery
- * 1/4 cup diced carrot
- * 1 1/2 pounds ground beef (try to avoid lean varieties), or veal (see Note)
- * 1 cup white wine
- * 4 cups tomato puree, preferably from San Marzano tomatoes
- * 1 cup beef stock, homemade if possible
- * 1 dried bay leaf
- * 1/2 teaspoon unrefined sea salt, plus extra to taste
- * 1 cup whole milk
- * Black pepper, freshly ground, to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat the oil and butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion, celery, and carrot. Sauté, stirring occasionally, until lightly golden, 3-5 minutes.
2. Add the meat and stir, allowing it to brown completely. Add the wine, and stir until the wine is completely evaporated.
3. Add the tomato puree, stock, bay leaf, and 1/2 teaspoon of salt, and stir.
4. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for 2-3 hours, stirring every 30 minutes.
5. Add the milk, stir, and continue simmering for another 10 minutes.
6. The sauce is ready when it reaches a thick consistency (it will have cooked down to about half of its original volume). Stir and add additional salt and pepper to taste, if needed.

TIP:

This sauce can be made a day ahead of time or made in large quantities and frozen until serving. Serve ragù alla Bolognese with thick pasta such as tagliatelle (as is done in Bologna), fettuccine, pappardelle, or rigatoni if you prefer a shorter pasta.

VARY IT!

You can use whatever kind of meat you choose in this recipe. Goat, lamb, pork, beef, veal, or combinations of your favorites all produce a fantastic sauce.

Enjoy with pleasure and health!

Salsa Besciamella/Béchamel Sauce

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 20 MIN

YIELD: 8 SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS

- * 3/4 cup butter
- * 3 tablespoons flour
- * 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- * 4 cups whole milk, preferably fresh, local, organic
- * 1 teaspoon unrefined sea salt

DIRECTIONS

1. In a small saucepan, add the butter and melt it over low heat.
2. Add the flour and whisk it in with the butter to combine.
3. Allow to cook for 1 minute, or until slightly golden. Add the nutmeg and whisk again.
4. In another small saucepan, bring the milk to a boil over medium heat.
5. As soon as it boils, add it into the other saucepan and whisk well until you have a thick, creamy sauce. If the sauce needs to be thicker, continue to cook it over low heat for a few minutes until it thickens and set aside.

TIP:

Besciamella is a perfect sauce for winter dishes. For a fantastic baked pasta, mix this recipe with 1 pound of rigatoni that is cooked until very al dente (about 3 minutes less than if you were serving immediately). Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Stir in cooked vegetables such as squash or zucchini, if desired. Top pasta with freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese and bake for 30 minutes, or until golden.

NOTE:

This recipe is often used to top filled savory Italian crepes (called crespelle in Italian) and in baked pasta dishes.

VARY IT!

In addition to this version, which is served in Italy, France, and the U.S., many cities around the world have their own variations. In Saudi Arabia, they add a few pieces of good-quality saffron to the Béchamel sauce and use it to top roasted fish. In Egypt, they often make the sauce with half the quantity of milk and the other half of chicken stock. It is then tossed into short pasta along with a meat sauce and baked. Eggs are stirred into the Besciamella sauce in Greece before it is used in the classic Pastitsio recipe.