

# Oven-Roasted Tomato Sauce, Meatballs, and Pappardelle

-inspired by Thomas Keller, rewritten for my own Home Kitchen

For the Sauce:

Combine the following in an ovenproof dish:

- 2 Tablespoons canola oil
- 1 cup finely chopped yellow onion
- 1 cup finely minced leeks (white and light green parts only)
- 1 cup finely chopped fennel
- 1 Tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon garlic
- Salt

Let cook for 45 minutes to an hour at 350° until the vegetables are tender and starting to caramelize.

While that bakes, get your tomatoes ready. Drain *two 28-32 ounce cans of whole peeled tomatoes* (San Marzano, if possible). Coarsely chop one can and puree the other one in a blender or with an immersion blender. Set aside.

When the vegetables in the oven are ready, stir in *2 Tablespoons of brown sugar and 2 Tablespoons of red wine vinegar* and return to the oven for about 20 minutes or until liquid is absorbed. (This took about 35 minutes in my oven.) Remove from the oven.

Add the tomatoes to the vegetables along with *a sachet (one smashed garlic clove, 10 peppercorns, 1 bay leaf, and 3 thyme sprigs—all tied in cheesecloth or wrapped in a coffee filter)*.

Put it back in the oven for 1 ½ hours, stirring every 30 minutes. It should not be a thin sauce. If there's too much liquid, continue cooking it till it thickens.

For the Meatballs:

Heat *2 Tablespoons of oil* over medium heat, then add *1 cup chopped onion and 2 teaspoons minced garlic*. Reduce the heat and cook gently for about 20 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool.

Mix:

- 2 lbs of ground beef (can mix sirloin, chuck, and veal, if desired)
- ½ lb of ground pork
- ¼ cup dried bread crumbs (I used homemade gluten-free crumbs)
- 3 Tablespoons of chopped parsley
- 1 large egg
- the cooked onion and garlic

Form into balls and put a cube of fresh mozzarella in the center of each one. Bake for 15-18 minutes at 425° F, or pan-fry them for a crispier crust.

Cook *1 pound of pappardelle or egg noodles*, toss with *4 Tablespoons of butter, juice of ½ a lemon, and 1 Tablespoon of parsley*.

Serve and enjoy!