

Tagliatelle con Ragù alla Bolognese

Flat Egg Noodles with Bolognese-Style Ragù

Serves 4

PREP TIME

20 minutes

COOK TIME

2 to 2½ hours

INGREDIENTS

5¼ oz. (150 g) pancetta

¼ cup (50 g) butter

1¾ oz. (50 g) carrot, finely diced

1¾ oz. (50 g) celery stalk,
finely diced

1¾ oz. (50 g) onion, finely diced

10½ oz. (300 g) ground beef,
coarse

A scant ½ cup (100 ml)
dry red wine

¾ oz. (20 g) triple
concentrated tomato paste,
or 5 tbsp. tomato sauce

Beef stock if needed (see p. 268)

A scant ½ cup (100 ml) milk

Fine sea salt

Freshly ground pepper

Ragù alla Bolognese with pasta is much loved yet often misunderstood. It is actually a stew, and it should never be drowned in tomato sauce. It is also advisable not to use only ground beef, as it usually gets dry. Pancetta adds some juiciness. The pig is the favorite animal of Italy's Emilia region, the region that gives us this recipe. In 1982, a version of this recipe was filed with the Bolognese Chamber of Commerce by the municipal delegate of the Italian Academy of Cuisine, or Accademia Italiana della Cucina, basically making it a "protected species." Our recipe adheres to the current authentic Bologna version. It is worth following the traditional guidelines here, and, in the process, doing without oregano, which is often found in poor imitations.

Dice the pancetta and finely chop with a mezzaluna, or crescent cutter. Melt the butter in a thick aluminum skillet about 8 inches (20 cm) in diameter and lightly fry the chopped pancetta in it. Add the carrots, celery, and onions, and sauté. Add the ground beef, stir to combine everything, and use a ladle to press the meat to the bottom of the pan to ensure it cooks evenly. Pour in the red wine and let it evaporate. Then stir in the tomato paste. Stir again to ensure everything is combined well, add the lid, and let simmer over low heat for 2 to 2½ hours. Add some beef stock if necessary. Just before the end of the cooking time, add the milk. Finally, season with salt and pepper to taste.

OUR TIP You will definitely want to eat this sauce with tagliatelle made with eggs (see p. 84), preferably freshly made, and combine the hot sauce with the pasta as soon as the sauce is ready.

