



Nicole McLaughlin's Italian Sunday Sauce



Ingredients:

- 2 pounds pork neck bones
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 ¼ pounds Italian sausage links
- 1 ½ cups finely chopped white onion
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 (12 ounce) cans tomato paste
- 1 (28 ounce) can tomato puree
- 1 (28 ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- 7 cups water
- 1 tablespoon white sugar, or more to taste
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tablespoon dried basil
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- 12 large cooked meatballs

Instructions:

1. Sprinkle neck bones on all sides with salt and pepper.
2. Heat 4 teaspoons oil in a large, heavy-bottomed stockpot or Dutch oven over medium high heat. Place neck bones in the pot and cook for 6 minutes, flipping halfway through. Transfer to a plate.
3. Add sausage links to the drippings and brown for 3 minutes on each side, adding remaining oil as needed. Set aside with the pork.
4. Add onion to the drippings and season with salt. Cook, stirring often, until onion is soft and translucent, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Stir in tomato paste and cook for 1 minute.
5. Add tomato puree and crushed tomatoes, then add water and sugar; cook, stirring constantly, until smooth. Add bay leaf. Rub basil and oregano between your fingers to release the aroma and add to the sauce.
6. Slice sausages into large chunks and return to the pot with the neck bones; bring to a simmer, stirring occasionally. Add meatballs; reduce heat to low, and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 4 to 6 hours.
7. Remove neck bones and bay leaf. Remove any meat remaining on the bones, shred, and return to the sauce.



Cook's Notes:

For homemade meatballs, try my [Best Easy Meatballs!](#)

Tips

Neck bones are available at many grocery stores. If you cannot find them, country-style ribs would be a good substitute.