

Hearty meat sauce packs on the prosciutto, beef

MEAT SAUCE FROM P. 18

sprinkle with the remaining grated pecorino and Parmesan cheeses.

Cover the dish with foil and bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until the sauce is bubbling and cheese looks completely melted. Remove the foil and continue baking an additional 5 to 7 minutes to get a deep golden color.

Let rest for 15 minutes before serving.

Nutrition information per serving: 789 calories; 362 calories from fat; 40 g fat (20 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 335 mg cholesterol; 56 g carbohydrate; 54 g protein; 3 g fiber; 2,199 mg sodium.

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Hearty meat sauce

BY J.M. HIRSCH

AP Food Editor

There is nothing subtle about this meat sauce.

It is jammed with flavorful ingredients, starting with a healthy four cloves of garlic (double it if you dare) and finishing with tomato paste, balsamic vinegar and Parmesan cheese.

Along the way it also takes on some serious seasonings and — for good measure — a half pound of prosciutto.

It may seem like overkill, and that's the point. From scratch pasta sauces generally develop their deep, rich flavors from a long simmer on the stove. But weeknight cooking usually doesn't involve that luxury.

To compensate for the faster pace, ingredients with serious oomph are employed. They also are ingredients that need little time to disperse throughout the

sauce, such as the vinegar and Parmesan.

One warning — salt only at the very end. Many people will find the saltiness contributed by the prosciutto and Parmesan to be more than enough.

If you want to give this already thick sauce a chunkier texture, add a 12-ounce jar of roasted red peppers (drained and chopped). For a bit of heat, try diced pickled jalapeno peppers.

If you find prosciutto a bit pricey, substitute an equal amount of lean bacon or deli-sliced ham. The flavors will be different, but still delicious.

Start to finish: 30 minutes

Servings: 6

2 tablespoons olive oil
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 medium red onion, finely diced
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1 teaspoon dry basil
1 teaspoon dry oregano
1 1/4 pound lean ground beef
1/2 pound prosciutto, finely chopped
28-ounce can diced tomatoes
3 tablespoons tomato paste
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

In a large saucepan over medium-high, combine the olive oil, garlic, red onion, paprika, basil and oregano. Saute until the onion is tender and seasonings are fragrant, about 5 minutes.

Add the ground beef and prosciutto. Continue to saute until the beef is cooked through and the prosciutto begins to



Prosciutto gives this hearty meat sauce a deep flavor mimicked by slow-cooked sauces but without all the time.

brown, about 8 minutes. Add the diced tomatoes and any juices, tomato paste and vinegar and bring to a simmer.

Reduce heat to low and cook for 5 minutes, stirring frequently, to let the flavors combine. Stir in the Parmesan cheese until melted, then season with salt and pepper.

Nutrition information per serving: 392 calories; 189 calories from fat; 21 g fat (7 g saturated; 1 g trans fats); 98 mg cholesterol; 13 g carbohydrate; 36 g protein; 2 g fiber; 1,753 mg sodium.

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