



EVERYDAY VEGGIE-LOADED RAGU

{ Gluten-free, Dairy-free, Refined sugar free, Paleo-option served on zoodles, spaghetti squash, etc }

Recipe makes about 4.5 Quarts (18 cups) of veg + meat sauce.

This recipe is scaled to make a batch enough for 3 meals serving 4 people each sitting (or a large group of 12). See freezing instruction below.

MAKE IN ADVANCE: Freezes wonderfully. Place extra portions in freezer-safe containers or zip-top freezer bags, label it and store frozen for up to 2 months. I often freeze individual lunch portions of the sauce too. To use, thaw overnight in the fridge and reheat on the stove top making sure you bring it all the way to a nice boil.

MEAT SUBSTITUTION: You may use another ground meat of choice instead of ground poultry. See my thoughts in the head notes above under "Get Lean".

INGREDIENTS

Ghee or cooking fat of your choice

2/3 lb cremini mushrooms, cleaned and small diced (about 4C)

1/3 lb portobello, cleaned, gills scraped off with spoon and small diced (about 2C)

3 medium carrots, peeled and fine diced (about 2C)

1 large onion, fine diced (about 1.5C)

2 celery stalks, fine diced (about 1C)

1 small zucchini, fine diced (about 1C)

3 cloves of garlic, minced

2 lbs ground turkey or ground chicken

1 tbsp dried oregano

2 tbsp tomato paste

1 C dry red wine like Cabernet Sauvignon, Sangiovese, Shiraz etc (sub with broth or water if strict Paleo)



3 jars of good quality marinara sauce (680ml per jar or about 8.5 Cups) (I use [Rao's](#))

2 bay leaves

1/3C unsweetened almond milk (or more to taste)

1 tbsp honey (or more to taste)

Kosher salt + ground black peppercorn + crushed red chili pepper flakes

METHOD

1. Heat a heavy-bottomed 6 Quart pot over medium-high heat. Have ready a very large bowl; large enough to park all the sauteed veggies after sauteeing (from steps 2 and 3 below).
2. Once very hot, add 1 tbsp of cooking fat and add about half the diced mushrooms. Saute and allow it to brown. Set aside. Add another tbsp of cooking fat and saute the remaining mushrooms. Doing it in batches avoids over-crowding and enables the mushrooms to brown properly. Once browned, season with salt and set aside in the large bowl.
2. Back on medium-high heat, add another tbsp of cooking fat and saute the onions. Season with 1/2 tsp kosher salt right away to encourage caramelization. Keep moving it around. When onions are just turning transparent, add the garlic, carrots, celery and zucchini along with another 1/2 tsp of kosher salt and continue to saute for a few minutes or veggies are just starting to soften. Set aside in the same large bowl holding the sauteed mushrooms.
3. Next, add 1 tbsp of cooking fat and brown the ground meat in 4 additions, adding 1/2 lb to the pot each time and adding more cooking fat sparingly as needed. As the first batch cooks through and browns just a bit around the edges, push it to the side and add the next batch of ground meat. Continue until done. Season the ground meat with about 1.5 to 2 tsp of kosher salt, and fresh ground black peppercorn.
4. To the pot holding the browned meat, clear a spot in the middle and add the dried oregano and the tomato paste. Allow both to develop their flavors from the dry heat for a minute before mixing it up with the meat. Add the red wine and cook off the alcohol by simmering it for a minute. Add all 3 jars of tomato sauce and the bay leaves into the pot and bring to a boil. Taste now and add salt as needed (amount depends on the salt content of your tomato sauce). Turn down to a simmer and cook with the lid on for at least 30 minutes or up to a few hours if you can.
5. Before serving, add unsweetened almond milk (or milk of your choice) and honey. Taste for tartness and add more of either / both to your liking. Serve over gluten-free pasta as pictured or other starch or vegetable like zoodles or spaghetti squash for a complete paleo-friendly meal. Whatever you choose, don't forget the dried red pepper flakes and fresh basil! *Enjoy and thank you for reading! xx*