



recipe card

2026

NAME OF DISH

Pg 1 of 2

Spaghetti & Meatballs

CATEGORY

Elk

PREP TIME

30-45 mins

COOK TIME

1.5 Hours

INGREDIENTS

- 3 lbs ground elk/pork blend (1.5 lbs each)
- Kosher salt
- Extra virgin olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 Tbsp finely chopped fresh flat-leafed parsley
- 1 cup milk
- 4 thick slices firm white bread (no crust) cut into cubes (about 2 cups)
- 1 large egg
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, plus more for serving
- Fresh ground black pepper
- ½ pound mozzarella cheese, grated
- Leaves from 3 fresh basil sprigs
- 4 cups heated Pomodoro Sauce

POMODORO SAUCE (4CUPS)

- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 cans (28 oz) whole, peeled tomatoes, preferably San Marzano, drained, crushed by hand, juices resvd.
- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves, torn into pieces
- Kosher Salt & fresh ground black pepper

directions

- Bring a big pot of water to boil for the spaghetti (1lb)
- Heat 3 Tbsp oil in an oven-proof skillet
- Add onion, garlic & parsley, cook until just soft (about 10 mins). Remove from heat, let cool.



- Pour milk over bread cubes in a bowl and let soak while veggies cool.
- Mix meats, egg, Parmigiano and season generously with salt and pepper.



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2026

NAME OF DISH

Pg 2 of 2

Spaghetti & Meatballs

CATEGORY

Venison (deer)

PREP TIME

30-45 mins

COOK TIME

1.5 hours

directions cont.

- Preheat oven to 350°F

• Hand squeeze the excess milk out of the bread, then add the bread to the bowl along with the cooled onion mixture. Gently combine all ingredients w/ hands until just mixed (don't overwork)

• Shape mixture into 10 meatballs.

• Heat 3-count of oil in skillet and brown all sides of the meatballs (about 10mins).

• Transfer meatballs to a baking dish and spoon about ½ of the tomato sauce over them. Shower with the mozzarella, scatter ½ of the basil leaves on top; drizzle w/ olive oil. Bake until cooked through (30 mins)

• Cook spaghetti al denté. Drain and place in large serving dish. Toss w/ the rest of the tomato sauce.

Spoon the meatballs onto the spaghetti and garnish with the rest of the basil leaves. Top with cheese.

POMODORO SAUCE

Heat olive oil in saucepan over med heat. Add onion & garlic, cook until soft (4-5 mins). Carefully add the

crushed tomatoes & about ½ cup of reserved juices.

Season w/ salt & pepper. Cook until sauce is thick,

about 15 mins. Taste & adjust seasonings if needed.

Bring to a boil, stirring for a few minutes w/ a wooden

spoon. Reduce heat, simmer 20-30 mins. Stir in fresh

basil and season again.

notes

Spaghetti and meatballs can be outstanding—or very boring. It's the subtle nuances in the recipe that make all the difference. The meatballs should be tender enough to cut with a spoon but firm enough to hold together, and here's the trick: bread crumbs soaked in milk. It's a trick I picked up in Naples, the meatball capital of the world.

Original Author: Patrick Duke