

Creamy Bolognese perfectly tops homemade pappardelle pasta

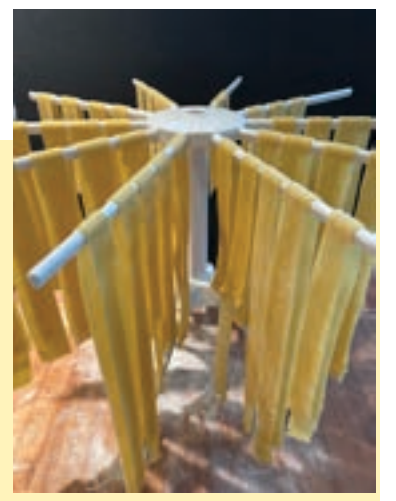
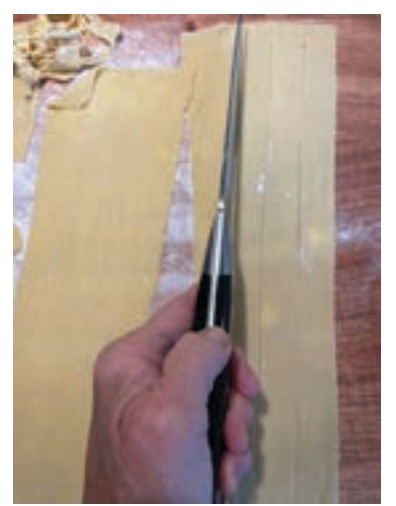
By Susie Iventosch



Homemade Pappardelle Pasta with Bison Bolognese Sauce



Photos Susie Iventosch



Bolognese or Ragu sauce? What is the difference? They both have meat, onions, tomatoes, herbs and wine. They both adorn pasta, and taste great with a sprinkling of Parmesan cheese, so they seem very similar. But, several years ago I learned that Bolognese is made with carrots, celery, and milk, while ragu does not normally use these ingredients. Also, Bolognese is normally made with white wine, where ragu is made with red wine. To me, the biggest difference is the use of milk in the Bolognese sauce. My mom never, ever put milk in her spaghetti sauce, so to me that was very strange.

Anyway, I started making Bolognese with all of these special ingredients, including a cup of milk, and my family and friends loved it. Great! But just when I thought I had Bolognese sauce dialed in, we went on a trip to Italy. If you can believe it, not a single restaurant we dined in told me they use milk in their Bolognese sauce. In fact, they all said they'd never heard of such a thing! So, now I am a bit confused. When you Google what makes Bolognese, milk is always in the ingredi-

ents, but not in Italy! Anyway ... we love it with the addition of milk, which makes the sauce a bit creamier and a little bit lighter.

In order to make homemade pasta, you need to have some way of drying the pasta. Some people, like me before I purchased a pasta drying rack, dry it over anything they can find, like bar stools, etc. You can also roll the pasta out with a rolling pin, but it is tough work. So, to make that easier, we use an Atlas Marconi Pasta Machine, which rolls the pasta dough out nice and thin. They also make a pappardelle attachment, but I think it's too wide — almost as wide as lasagna noodles, so I prefer to cut my own pappardelle once the dough is rolled out.

I sometimes make my pasta with a combination of semolina flour and Italian Type 00 flour, which is softer, slightly sweeter, and lower in protein or gluten than American flour. Other times I use only the Italian flour, which makes the dough a bit easier to work with. The semolina flour gives the pasta a little more bite, where the Italian soft flour is a bit more tender.

Bison Bolognese Sauce

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds ground bison (or a combination of bison, turkey, venison, or elk)
- 1 large yellow onion, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 2 stalks celery, thickly sliced (I add these last)
- 2 carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 large shallot, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 fresh basil leaves, minced
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 3 tbsp. tomato paste
- 4 plum tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- 1/2 cup white wine (red would also be just fine)
- 1 cup chicken or beef broth
- 1 28-oz. can diced tomatoes or puréed tomatoes
- 1 14-oz. can tomato sauce
- 1 cup milk

DIRECTIONS

Heat oil in a large frying pan or Dutch oven. Cook onions, shallots and carrots over medium-low heat until onions are translucent and carrots are beginning to soften. Add herbs and fresh basil and continue to cook for several more minutes until aromatic.

Add ground bison and cook over medium heat until cooked all the way through, using a fork, or a meat chopper utensil, to break up the meat as you cook it and to keep it from clumping. Once the meat is cooked through, add the tomato paste, plum tomatoes and white wine, and mix well. Add remaining ingredients and simmer over low heat for at least one hour, (even better if you can simmer it longer) to let the flavors meld.

Serve very hot over cooked pasta and garnish with freshly grated Parmesan or Pecorino Romano cheese.

Homemade Pappardelle Pasta

INGREDIENTS

- 10 oz. extra-fine pasta flour (Italian Soft Wheat Type 00 Flour)
- 1 tsp. salt
- 3 large eggs + 1 egg white (This can change depending upon the size of the eggs, which vary quite a bit. If the dough seems too dry, add a little bit more egg, and if it seems too wet, add a little bit more flour until you arrive at a dough that is workable — not too sticky, but not too dry. It's not an exact science, but more done by feel.)

DIRECTIONS

Mix salt with flours and place on a large cutting board or in a large bowl. Make a well in the center of the flour using the bottom of a small bowl or a large spoon. Start mixing the 3 whole eggs into the flour with a fork, bringing more and more flour into the mixture as you go. If you need extra liquid, add the extra egg white. Mix until you arrive at a workable dough — not too dry or too sticky. When your dough feels workable, gather it into a ball. The dough will be fairly stiff at this point. Knead dough for 4-5 minutes, dusting with flour as needed, until the dough is smooth.

Divide the dough in half and form each half into a disc. Wrap the dough discs in plastic wrap and refrigerate until you are ready to roll and cut the pasta. When this time comes, take dough from the refrigerator and let it sit on the counter for about 10 minutes before rolling it out. Now, working in batches, use your pasta machine to roll the dough to your desired thickness. Lay the dough out on a cutting board and using a chef's knife, cut the rolled dough (lengthwise) into wide (3/4-inch) noodles. String the pasta up on the pasta rack and allow to dry for several hours before cooking it.

Atlas Marconi Pasta Maker:

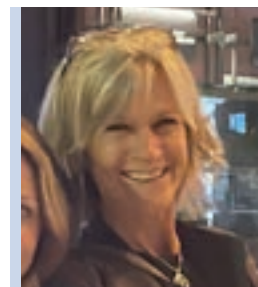
https://www.marcatito.it/en/product/manual_machines/atlas-150

Pasta drying racks:

<https://www.foodandwine.com/best-pasta-drying-racks-8385832>

Italian pasta flour:

<https://caputoflour.com/products/caputo-00-chefs-flour>



Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com. This recipe can be found on our website: www.lamorindaweekly.com If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977. Or visit <https://treksandbites.com>

Oops! I did it again

By Alison Burns

Yes, I completely overlooked the significance of the fourth Wednesday in November when around 65 million Americans make their way back to their childhood homes like spawning salmon. Unfortunately, not being a U.S. native, I have no instinctive grasp of the importance of Thanksgiving. It's like trying to explain Boxing Day to an American.

Some years ago I made the mistake of booking a late-November flight to Detroit, totally unaware of the nightmare awaiting me on my return journey the following Wednesday. I'd been proud of paying \$300 for direct flights but my husband — who loves to dive into our million air-miles — promised he could get it cheaper. And he did. Just \$11 to fly half way across the country and back.

What he didn't mention though, was that this would involve an incredibly long and noisy layover in Salt Lake City, perched on a hard plastic chair for hours, not daring to get up to use the bathroom or buy a coffee for fear I'd sacrifice my hard-won seat to the vultures hovering precipitously close by.

I texted my misery to my husband: "I could have walked it quicker than this."

My cheese-parer husband

texted back one phrase: "\$11."

Watching the frazzled moms juggling unbelievable quantities of boxes, bags and babies, while the dads lingered several paces behind carrying nothing heavier than an iPhone, I swore I'd never again fly just before Thanksgiving. But somehow, last month, I found I'd done it again.

Too late to reschedule my flight back from London, I envisaged myself trapped in the middle seat for 12 hours, a fretful toddler in front of me and a happy drunk behind. To my left would be an excessively talkative passenger, with the aisle seat occupied by someone so deeply asleep it would be impossible for me to escape and stretch my legs when I felt the throbbing of an incipient DVT in my calves.

Airplanes are not healthy places: the things that have been discovered in seat-backs are beyond mention in a family newspaper. Remember never to eat directly off your tray table: some people confuse them with footrests. Don't walk around barefoot: every bodily fluid has landed on that floor. And never drink directly from the faucets: a 2004 EPA study that tested 158 aircraft ultimately identified 20 planes with either E.coli or coliform bacteria in their water supply.

But even though the number of airborne passengers this Thanksgiving reached their highest since 2005, some folks still needed a nudge.

It's late November when an elderly man phones his son to say that he and his wife are getting divorced. "We're sick of one another," he snarls. "Tell your sister." Ten minutes later, his furious daughter calls: "No way are we letting you break up our happy home. We're coming home to discuss this. Don't argue. We've already booked our flights."

The old man turns to his wife and says, "Okay, they'll both be here for Thanksgiving. Now what shall we do about Christmas?"



Alison Burns is a regular contributor to Lamorinda Weekly and lives in Orinda.

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