**Spaghetti with Superb Meat Sauce**

Harvest time: Yummy tomatoes! But how am I going to use all these delicious tomatoes so they don’t go to waste? Don’t worry, here’s how.



Family gave my Mom McCormick’s Spice Cookbook 45 years ago. I have been cooking this sauce ever since. A friend brought me her sauce when I was too sick to cook and I loved it. This recipe is updated to add ingredients from my friend’s recipe and use fresh tomatoes and herbs from the garden.

Pick tomatoes from the garden (about 8 medium / large tomatoes and a few handfuls of cherry tomatoes).

**Ingredients**

2 lbs fresh tomatoes from the garden (about 8 med / lg or intermix with cherry tomatoes) OR 24 oz. tomato paste and 1 quart water (not used if using fresh tomatoes)

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| 1.5 lbs ground beef | ¼ tsp. Crushed Red Pepper |
| 1 Green Bell Pepper | ½ tsp. Oregano Leaves |
| 2 Cloves Garlic, minced | ½ tsp. Basil Leaves, Minced or use fresh |
| 1 tsp. Onion Powder or 1 med onion chopped | ½ tsp. Parsley Flakes or fresh if available |
| 1 tsp. Chili Powder | ½ tsp. Rosemary Leaves, crushed |
| 2 Bay Leaves | 1/8 tsp. Nutmeg |
| 1 tsp. Celery Salt | 1 cup hearty red wine such as Chianti or Burgundy |
| ¼ tsp. Black Pepper (more if you like it spicy) | 8 oz. canned or fresh mushrooms sliced |
| 2 tsp. Sugar |  |

**Steps**

1. If you’re preparing fresh tomatoes, dice them and put them in a Dutch oven. Bring to simmer and stir occasionally for 2 hours. This will eventually cook down to a very thick tomato sauce. No need to remove skins or seeds unless they are objectionable to you. I did not notice any skins in my sauce. If you’re using canned tomato paste, add it and 1 quart water in Step 3.
2. Meanwhile, brown meat and soften onion, green pepper, and garlic in frying pan.
3. Add spices and ingredients above. It’s good for the spices to roast with the meat.
4. Add this mixture to the fresh tomato sauce, if you prepared it. Or iff using canned tomato paste, add it now with 1 quart water.
5. Add wine and mushrooms.
6. Simmer 2 hours or longer, covered.
7. Remove cover to thicken to desired consistency. Or you may want to add additional tomatoes or wine to thin it.
8. Serve over Rotini (spiral pasta) with freshly grated parmesan cheese accompanied with salad, garlic bread, and more Chianti.