

0.1 Ragù (alla Bolognese)

↔ 1 *Onion* (~160 g) **For the Soffrito**

↔ 1 *Large Carrot* (~80 g)

↔ 1 – 2 *Celery Stems* (~80 g)

↔ 1 *Knob Butter*

Medium dice (~8mm cubes) the onion, celery and carrot. Melt the butter in a pan, and add the vegetables, mixing to coat them in butter. Gently fry until the vegetables become fragrant and begin to soften.

This mix of vegetables fried in this way is called an Italian Soffritto.

↔ ~500 g *Minced Beef* **For the Meat**

↔ *Olive Oil*

Fry the beef into another large, hot, oiled frying pan. Break up any large chunks, and mix the beef around the pan occasionally to stop it burning.

At first, the beef should fry in the oil, and begin to caramelize. As the meat heats through, it will release water, stopping the caramelisation.

Modification *Ragù can be made with more than just beef. Venison, boar, pork, and more can be used. For a little more flavour, a mix of beef and other meats like pancetta can be delicious.*

↔ *Wine (Ideally Red)*

Once the water released by the beef has boiled away, pour in a few hundred millilitres of wine. Use a spatula or similar to clean the bottom of the pan with the wine, absorbing any of the brown caramelised material stuck to the bottom of the pan.

Allow the wine to boil away by around two thirds in volume. This will concentrate the flavours, and remove excess alcohol.

↔ ~600 g *Small Tomatoes* **For the Tomato Passata**

↔ ~4 *Cloves of Garlic*

↔ *Handful of Basil Leaves*

↔ *Salt and Pepper*

↔ *Olive Oil* *Oregano*

Gently crush the garlic with the side of a knife and remove the skin. Combine the tomatoes, garlic, basil leaves, and a dash of olive oil with salt, oregano and pepper to taste in a blender, and blend into a smooth tomato liquid.

Modification *Store-bought tomato passata can be used in place of fresh tomatoes.*

For the Combined Sauce

Pour the meat, soffrito and tomato components into a large saucepan, mix and bring to the boil.

Put a lid on the sauce, and find the lowest temperature where it continues to gently bubble.

Leave the sauce for around four hours, periodically tasting and giving it a mix to ensure it does not stick to the bottom of the pan. Adjust the temperature or add more water if necessary. Removing the lid for a period will allow excess water to escape.

↔ *Milk* When the sauce is ready to be used, a dash of milk should be added, which helps to temper the flavours and bring together the sauce.

Ragù is a traditional Italian sauce, and can be made with many different ingredients. There is plenty of scope to be creative.

The Ragù described here is often used to make dishes like Lasagne, or it can be served as a sauce with pasta. It can be frozen in portions and used later for a quick meal.