

Three-Meat Ragù Bolognese

4 tablespoons virgin olive oil	3-4 tablespoons tomato paste
¼ pound speck, prosciutto, or smoked ham	1 pinch peperoncino
1 onion minced	1 tablespoon minced parsley
1 celery stalk minced	1 teaspoon thyme
1 carrot minced	½ teaspoon marjoram
1 garlic clove minced	Pinch of nutmeg
½ pound Italian sausage	1¼ cups of beef broth
½ pound lean ground beef	1 tablespoon flour
1 ounce dried porcini mushrooms	2-3 tablespoons heavy cream
⅔ cup white wine	2-3 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 teaspoon sugar	⅛ teaspoon black pepper

Have the speck, prosciutto, or ham cut in one thick slice, then chop fine.

Soak the dried porcini in 1½ cups of hot water for at least ½ hour.

In a heavy pot, fry the speck or ham gently in 3 tablespoons of oil until it becomes golden in color, but not crisp. Add the onion, celery, carrot, and garlic and cook over low heat for about 15 minutes, covering the pot for the first 10 minutes. Then uncover, add the parsley, the thyme the marjoram, and the peperoncino, and continue to cook until the vegetables are tender but not browned. Add the tablespoon of flour and cook for 2 minutes.

In a frying pan, sauté the sausage (which has been removed from the casing) and the ground beef in the remaining tablespoon of oil, breaking into small bits until the meat is well seared.

Drain the mushrooms from the water, reserving the liquid. Chop the mushrooms and add to the ground meats, cooking for 5 minutes. Add the wine and cook for 5 minutes, scraping the bottom of the pan, until the wine has evaporated.

Strain the mushroom-soaking water through a fine sieve lined with a damp paper towel to remove any dirt or sediment.

Add the ground meats to the vegetables. Stir in the tomato paste, the beef broth, the strained mushroom water, the nutmeg, sugar, and the black pepper. Bring to a boil, then simmer gently for about 1½-2 hours, stirring frequently. If the mixture gets too dry, you may need to add water a bit at a time.

Stir in the cream and the butter. Taste for seasoning. Serve over tortellini, tagliatelle, or other small pasta.