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Source: “Biba’s Italy” cookbook by Biba Caggiano

Recipe: Rigatoni Dragged with Florentine Meat Ragu

Ingredients:

1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 small onion, finely minced (about 1 cup)
1 small carrot, minced (about 1/2 cup)
1 small celery stalk, minced (about 1/2 cup)
1 sprig of fresh rosemary leaves, chopped (about 2 tablespoons)
1 tablespoon chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
2 garlic cloves, peeled & minced
1 pound ground beef chuck
3 to 4 chicken livers, finely minced
1 cup medium bodied red wine, such as Chianti Classico
2 large ripe tomatoes, or 3 canned plum tomatoes, peeled & minced
1/8 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
Small pinch of crushed red pepper flakes
Grated zest of 1/2 lemon
Salt to taste
2 1/2 cups Chicken Broth

Steps:

Heat oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. As soon as the oil is nice & hot, add the onion, carrot, & celery, & cook, stirring, until the vegetables begin to soften, about 5 minutes. Add the rosemary, parsley, & garlic, & stir until the mixture has a nice golden color, 3-4 minutes more.

Raise the heat to high. Add the beef & the chicken livers & cook, stirring from time to time & breaking up the meat with a wooden spoon, until the meat is golden brown, 10-12 minutes.

Add the wine & stir until half of it has evaporated. Add the tomatoes, nutmeg, red pepper flakes, & lemon zest. Season with salt. Add 2 cups of the chicken broth & bring to a fast simmer. Reduce the heat to very low, partially cover, & simmer, stirring from time to time, until the ragu has a rich brown color & dense consistency, about 2 hours. If the sauce reduces too much, add a little more broth. Taste, adjust the seasoning, & set aside until ready to use. The ragu can be prepared several hours or a few days ahead.