

## Italian Gravy

Serves 8-10

### *For the sauce:*

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 rack baby back ribs cut into 2-rib sections
- Salt and pepper
- 1 pound Italian sausage links
- 2 onions, diced (about 2 cups)
- 1 1/4 teaspoons dried oregano
- 3 tablespoons tomato paste
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 (28 ounce) cans crushed tomatoes
- 2/3 cup beef broth
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh basil leaves

### *For the meatballs:*

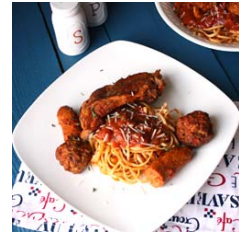
- 1/3 cup Italian bread crumbs
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley
- Pinch red pepper flakes
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons ketchup
- 2/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- Salt and pepper
- 1 pound ground beef

- 1 1/2 pounds linguine or spaghetti

Adjust your oven rack to the lower third of the oven and preheat to 325 degrees.

Heat oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat until just smoking. Pat the ribs dry with a paper towel, season with salt and pepper, and place in the pan (do this in two batches). Brown all sides of the ribs, about 5-7 minutes total. Remove to a plate and repeat with the remaining ribs. Brown the sausages on all sides and remove to the plate with the ribs.

Reduce the heat to medium, add the onions and oregano and cook until the onions are starting to brown, about 5 minutes. Add the tomato paste and cook while stirring until it's



very dark, about 3 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add in the cans of tomatoes and the beef broth and scrape up the browned bits on the bottom of the pan. Place the ribs and sausage in the sauce and bring to a simmer. Cover and place the pan in the oven for about 2.5 hours or until the ribs are tender.

To make the meatballs, get a large bowl. Mix together the bread crumbs, parsley, red pepper flakes, garlic, onion powder, egg, ketchup, Parmesan cheese, salt, and pepper. Once incorporated, mix in the ground beef. Form the mixture into 10 balls and place on a small parchment- or foil-lined baking sheet. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until ready to use.

About 30 minutes before the sauce is done, place the meatballs in the oven next to the sauce (not in the sauce) and bake for 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, transfer them into the sauce and let them finish cooking for about 15 more minutes until cooked through.

Meanwhile, boil your pasta until al dente. When everything is finished cooking, mix one cup of the sauce with the drained pasta. Place the pasta on a platter with the meat and serve the extra sauce in a bowl. Garnish with Parmesan cheese.

Adapted from Cook's Illustrated

\*[www.shemakesandbakes.com](http://www.shemakesandbakes.com)\*