

Spaghetti and Meatballs

1 tbsp. vegetable oil
1 cup chopped onions
2 cloves garlic, minced *or* 1 tsp. minced jarred garlic
3 (14.5 oz.) cans petite diced tomatoes, undrained
1 (6 oz.) can tomato paste
2 tsp. brown sugar
1 1/2 tsp dried oregano, crushed
1/2 tsp. dried basil, crushed
1/2 tsp. dried thyme, crushed
Pinch of red pepper flakes
1 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
1 bay leaf
2 cups water
1 recipe UNCOOKED Everyday Italian Meatballs
1 (16 oz.) package spaghetti
Grated or shredded Parmesan cheese (opt)

In a 5 or 6 qt. Dutch oven, heat the oil over medium heat. Add onions and garlic and cook until tender. Stir in *undrained* tomatoes, tomato paste, brown sugar, oregano, basil, thyme, red pepper flakes, salt, pepper, and bay leaf. Stir in the water. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, uncovered, for 1 1/2 to 2 hours or till sauce is of desired consistency, stirring occasionally. Remove bay leaf.

While sauce is cooking, prepare the Everyday Italian Meatballs according to the directions, but DO NOT COOK. Set aside.

Add UNCOOKED meatballs to the sauce the last 20 minutes of cooking. Cook the spaghetti according to the package directions while the sauce and meatballs are simmering. Taste sauce to see if additional salt is needed. Serve meatballs and sauce over hot cooked spaghetti and serve with grated or shredded Parmesan cheese, if desired.

Meat Sauce Variation: Omit vegetable oil and meatballs. In a 5 or 6 qt. Dutch oven, cook 1.5 pounds of ground beef, sausage, or a combination of the two with the onion and garlic till meat is browned and vegetables are tender. Drain off fat. Return to Dutch

oven and continue with sauce preparation as directed. Before serving, add additional salt to taste.