



healthy-ish turkey bolognese

Makes 8 to 10 servings (freeze half!)

~20 minutes active cook time, 50 minutes total cook time (BUT, if you do have more time, simmer the sauce for up to 3 hours for the best texture and flavor.)

Tools:

- [Food processor](#) or [blender](#)
- Large, heavy-bottomed pot; skillet (only if you have a 14-incher though!); or [dutch oven](#)
- [Chef's knife](#)
- [Cutting board](#)

Ingredients:

- 2 medium carrots, washed (no need to peel) and trimmed
- 3 celery stalks, washed and trimmed
- 1 medium yellow onion, peeled
- 4 garlic cloves
- 2 tablespoons butter or olive oil
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg (you can omit this if you don't already own it)
- 2 pounds ground turkey
- 1 (28-ounce) can tomato puree
- 1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 16 ounces cauliflower rice (fresh or frozen)
- Kosher salt
- 1 cup half and half (or 1 1/2 cups whole milk, or 1 cup heavy cream)
- Zest of 1 lemon (you can omit this if zesting a lemon sounds annoying to you right now, but it adds a nice flavor!)
- 1 pound pasta (I like a tubular pasta like rigatoni, penne, or radiatori for bolognese, but spaghetti or fettuccine are traditional!)
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Cut **2 medium carrots, 3 celery stalks, and 1 medium yellow onion** into 3 or 4 pieces each and throw them in a food processor or blender along with **4 garlic cloves**. Pulse until very finely diced. (If you have neither a food processor nor a blender, you can finely dice them all by hand.)

Melt **2 tablespoons butter (or oil)** in a large, heavy-bottomed pot over medium-high heat. I actually used my 14-inch skillet — the more surface area, the better! Add the diced vegetables and **1 tablespoon dried oregano, 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes, and 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg** and cook, stirring often, for 3 to 4 minutes.

Add **2 pounds ground turkey** and cook, chopping into tiny crumbles, until cooked through and all moisture has evaporated, 4 to 5 minutes.

Stir in **28 ounces tomato puree, 28 ounces diced tomatoes, 16 ounces cauliflower rice, 4 teaspoons kosher salt, 1 cup half and half, and the zest of 1 lemon** until combined.

Bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat to low and cook for **30 minutes to 3 hours**. It will be best after 3 hours (the meat will become super tender!), but it will still be absolutely delicious if you only have 30 minutes.

As it cooks, stir the sauce every 20 minutes or so. It should only have a bubble every now and then, no rapid bubbles. **If the sauce thickens so much that it's starting to stick to the pot, simply stir in 1/4 cup water (or stock, if you have some lying around) at a time and keep cooking.** At the end, the sauce should look like sloppy joe meat (very thick).

20 minutes before you're ready to eat, boil **1 pound of rigatoni** in heavily salted water. Cook until al dente. Seriously, the pasta should still have a "bite" to it — aka feel uncooked in the center. We're going to keep cooking it!

Scoop **1 cup of pasta cooking water** out of the pot and reserve it. Drain the pasta in a colander and return it to the empty pot. Stir **4 cups of the bolognese, 1/2 cup pasta cooking water, and 1/2 cup grated Parmesan** into the pasta over medium-low heat. Stir constantly until the pasta is cooked to your liking and the sauce has thickened and is sticking to the pasta. You might need to add another splash of pasta cooking water to get the perfect consistency. Taste before serving — you might want to add more cheese, more salt, more pepper! Do your thing! Make it your own!

Divide the pasta between 4 to 6 bowls and top with more **grated Parmesan**.

Buon appetito!