

## *Mamoo's Spaghetti with Home Cooked Sauce* *by J. D. Moss*

There was this exciting anticipation every Sunday as the last hymn was sung at the Baptist church I attended in Belton, Texas with my family. It wasn't because I was bored with church - I loved going to church. It was a literal hunger inside of me and the knowledge that when we went to my grandparents' house, only a few blocks away, there would be a large pot of my grandmother's homemade spaghetti sauce waiting for me.

My emotional filled memory has the spaghetti cooking on her stove every Sunday, though I know that is not the case. She did make it quite often and although my brother and sister liked it, they would have preferred it less often. I suppose that time has reshaped my memory and made this event a little more special than it was, yet that is not to say there wasn't a special bond between my grandmother and I, and her spaghetti.



*Photo by J.D. Moss*

She often told me that she was making it for me. I can still see the love in her eyes as she served me my very large plate of the steaming hot meat sauce on top of the yellow bed of spaghetti, there was no doubt she truly enjoyed cooking my favorite food and seeing the smile on my face as I ate.

As the years past and my grandmother's health declined, so did the quality of her

spaghetti. She didn't take the time to cook it as long, she would forget to add some ingredient, or she would put too much salt in the sauce, so it became less desirable, yet this did not stop me from eating it. I made sure she knew how much I loved it, not because it was as good as it had been, but because she still took so much joy cooking it.

Even when the sauce was too watery or it had a bland taste, I never wanted her to know. I never complained, I always eat a large portion and always let her know how much I appreciated her for cooking it. So many of the foods I eat have this type of memory and a connection to someone I love. As much as I love the food, it is the people and the stories I remember the most. For me that is what eating at the family table is all about, the joy we take in the simplest pleasures of life and in each other.

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what makes it  
great!

5 Tablespoons of Olive oil.  
2 Large white onions, peeled.  
2 cloves of garlic, minced.  
2 (6 oz.) cans of tomato paste.  
1 (28 oz.) can diced tomatoes.  
1 Tablespoon oregano.  
1 Tablespoon parsley flakes.  
1 teaspoon salt.  
1/2 teaspoon sweet basil.  
1/2 teaspoon thyme.  
1 bay leaf.  
2 teaspoon sugar.  
1 teaspoon lemon.  
1 (15 oz.) can tomato sauce.  
1 lb. hamburger.  
½ stick of Butter.

The last ingredient is not one my grandmother used, but something I add it to give the sauce a little bit of a Texas kick!

1/2 teaspoon of Cayenne.

*It's all about the sauce!*

Every great spaghetti starts with a great sauce!

Take a large saucepan and put in the olive oil, garlic, and onions. Sauté on medium heat until the onions start to caramelize, this will give the sauce a little bit of a sweet taste.

Add the tomato paste and place the heat on high. It is important to keep stirring the paste until it becomes a brownish-red color. Then add the diced tomatoes, oregano, parsley, salt, basil, thyme, sugar, lemon, and bay leaf.

Once you have allowed all these ingredients to cook together for a few minutes, add the tomato sauce and reduce the heat to medium. Then add the butter, stirring until it has melted into the sauce.

Cook the hamburger in a heated pan and break it down to small pieces as it cooks. Do not stir it too often, let it brown for better flavor. When it is done, drain off the grease, but do not rinse, and add it to the sauce.

Let the sauce cook from two to four hours if you can wait that long and serve over your favorite pasta.

**Cooking tip!**

Use a non-metal spoon when cooking any food that has tomatoes because metal can affect the taste of the sauce.