

TRADITIONAL SPAGHETTI & BEAN BALLS



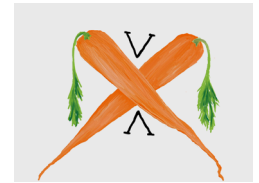
SERVES: 6-8

PREP TIME: 30 MINS

COOK TIME: 30 MINS

TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR

THE VARIANT VEGGIE



PLANT-BASED
NUTRITION.

NEVER BLAND.
ALWAYS VARIANT.

#VEGAN #HIGHPROTEIN #GLUTENFREEOPTION #SOYFREE

INGREDIENTS

1 lb. spaghetti of choice

FOR BEAN BALLS:

2 TBSP ground flax seed

4 TBSP water

3 cups canned or cooked chickpeas, low or no-salt added, drained and rinsed

1 TBSP tamari or liquid aminos

1-2 tsp extra virgin olive oil

1/4 cup yellow onion, finely diced

2-3 garlic cloves, minced

1/2 cup bread crumbs (GF if preferred)

3-4 TBSP nutritional yeast

1 tsp each: dried oregano, basil, and thyme

1/4 cup fresh parsley, finely chopped

1 cup shredded carrot

1/4 tsp red pepper flakes

FOR MARINARA:

1 tsp extra virgin olive oil

3-4 garlic cloves

1/4 cup yellow onion, finely diced

1 TBSP tomato paste

1 28-oz can whole, peeled tomatoes, no salt added, de-seeded and hand crushed (see note)*

1/2 tsp sea salt

1/2 tsp each: dried oregano, basil, and thyme

Fresh pepper to taste

Toppings: vegan parmesan, fresh basil

METHOD

Heat oven to 400 degrees F. Prepare a large baking sheet by lining with parchment paper.

In a large bowl, combine flax seeds and water. Allow to sit for at least 5 minutes.

Add chickpeas and tamari to the bowl of a food processor. Pulse until no whole beans remain. Set aside.

Heat a small skillet over the lowest heat. When hot, add EVOO, followed by diced onion and minced garlic. Sweat over low heat for 10-12 minutes to release flavor. Remove when translucent and fragrant!

Add remaining ingredients, along with blended chickpeas, onions, and garlic, to the large bowl with the flax mixture. Fold together with a rubber spatula initially, then get your hands involved!

The mixture should be slightly sticky and hold together easily. If it appears dry, add a 1-2 tsp grapeseed oil.

When the mixture is well-combined, begin forming balls. The goal size is around a heaping tablespoon (see above photo). Place on the baking sheet and bake for a total of 30 minutes, flipping at the halfway point.

While the bean balls are baking, place a large pasta pot over high heat. When it comes to a rolling boil, add pasta of choice and cook according to package instructions. Set aside with a small drizzle of EVOO to keep moist.

Make your marinara: Heat a medium-sized saucepan over low heat. Add EVOO followed by the garlic, onion, and a good pinch of salt. Again, allow to gently sweat for about 10-15 minutes. The goal is no browning, just lightly translucent in color. Next, add tomato paste and increase heat to medium-low. Stir constantly for 1-2 minutes. Add the hand-crushed tomatoes with juices, followed by the spices and salt. Bring to a simmer, not a boil, stirring occasionally (to be sure the sauce does not burn) for about 10 minutes, uncovered. Taste for seasoning preferences before serving!

When the bean balls have finished cooking, serve pasta with marinara and bean balls. I highly recommend topping with vegan parmesan (recipe in notes!) and fresh basil or parsley! Bon Appetite!

NOTES:

Vegan Parmesan: 1 cup raw walnuts, 1-2 TBSP nutritional yeast, 1 small garlic clove, 1/2 tsp sea salt. Blend together in a small food processor until finely ground.

*The ideal tomatoes for classic marinara sauces are **vine-ripened San Marzano**, or other sweet plum varieties, canned shortly after harvesting. 'No salt added' means more than just adding extra sodium to your diet. Salt is added as a preservative and it typically means the tomatoes weren't ripe before canning. This results in a bland and mushy tomato. If you can't find 'no salt added,' choose the lowest salt content possible, ideally less than 100 mg in a 28 oz can. **Good quality tomatoes will be the key to a flavorful marinara!**

Hand crushing the tomatoes will give the sauce a rustic and classic feel. De-seeding can be done over a fine mesh strainer to be sure you don't lose any juices! You can also use a [food mill](#) if you have one handy! Running short on time? Buy **strained tomatoes** as the seeds are already removed! Again, look for 'no salt added' and be sure it's just tomatoes and their juices on the ingredients list!

NUTRITION:

Serving Size: Roughly 1 cup cooked pasta, 1/4 cup marinara, 3-4 bean balls

Total Calories: 415 Total Fat: 3g Saturated Fat: 0 g

Sodium: 239 mg Potassium: 593 mg Total Carbohydrate: 77 g

Fiber: 10 g Sugar: 8 g Protein: 18 g

Vitamin A: 36% Vitamin C: 17% Calcium: 8% Iron: 17% (Percent Daily Value)