

# Bolognese Sauce from Snowmass

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Whenever the desire (need?) strikes for a bowl of pasta, what kind usually comes to mind for you? For many of us, it's a hearty, meaty Bolognese sauce. That's why we were so excited when writer Sandy Bornstein said she been given a unique recipe from the Executive Chef at Sam's, an on-mountain restaurant in Snowmass, Colorado, a ski resort. We found his key ingredient to be a pleasant surprise!



*Let Parmesan snow down on this Bolognese, like the snow at Sam's on-mountain restaurant in Snowmass, Colorado. Photo by Jamie Jaye Fletcher.*

## **An Italian Staple— Bolognese Sauce from Sam's On-Mountain Snowmass Dining Experience**

I had the good fortune to dine at Sam's, Snowmass' newest on-mountain dining experience at the top of the Village Express chairlift before the ski season was abruptly canceled due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Unlike other ski mountain restaurants catering primarily to a fast food audience eager to return to the slopes, Sam's appeals to the skier who relishes Italian cuisine in an upscale setting. Before opening for the 2019-2020 season, the restaurant underwent a \$2.5 million remodel



that transformed an existing smokehouse into an elegant restaurant where guests can remove their ski boots and gaze out through oversized windows.



***Take in the views, on-mountain in Snowmass, Colorado at Sam's restaurant. Photo by the Traveling Bornsteins.***

Our leisurely multi-course à la carte lunch introduced me to the concept of combining a noteworthy dining experience with an abbreviated day of skiing. Until the mountain reopens next ski season, foodies disappointingly will not be able to indulge in any of Sam's cuisine.

In the meantime, I asked Andrew Helsley, one of the Executive Chefs for Snowmass' on-mountain dining, if he would share one of Sam's signature recipes. Skiing at Snowmass may be put on hold, but lovers of Italian food can bring a bit of Sam's into their homes during the off-season. Helsley graciously offered an introduction to the restaurant's version of Bolognese sauce and shared an adapted recipe that can easily

be prepared in a home environment.



## **Bolognese Sauce from Sam's On-Mountain Snowmass Dining Experience Courtesy of Executive Chef Andrew Helsley**

*If there's one dish that exemplifies our passion at Sam's for simple quality ingredients treated with tons of love and respect it's our grass fed beef Bolognese.....well, maybe our bread, but I don't think that recipe (water, flour, salt and starter) would provide a whole lot in the way of info without years of training.*

*Our Bolognese omits the standard ground lamb and substitutes local grass-fed beef from Nieslanik Ranch in Carbondale, CO. Grass fed beef is lean and flavorful and strikes a perfect balance between lamb, which many find to be a strong flavor and standard ground beef which doesn't lend a whole lot in flavor or texture.*

*We serve our bolo with house extruded rigatoni pasta, however [dried rigatoni](#) is an excellent substitute. The assumption with Bolognese is that it's a tomato sauce with the addition of meat. With this recipe, you'll find that in great Bolognese that's far from the case. The heart of our Bolognese is a soffrito of slow cooked vegetables with a small amount of tomato paste. The sauce is finished with a touch of cream and fresh mint. The result is an unctuous, rich sauce greater than the sum of its parts and perfect for a day of skiing.*

### **Soffrito**

1 yellow onion-peeled and rough chopped

½ bulb fennel-rough chopped

1 large carrot-rough chopped

Sachet of fresh thyme and rosemary

1 cup olive oil

1 tsp. red pepper flakes

1 tsp. ground fennel seed

1 TBS. Kosher Salt

8 oz. Tomato Paste



Chef Andrew, photo by Jamie Jaye Fletcher.

Combine the prepped vegetables in a [food processor](#) and pulse to a fine chop (you may want to do this in small-ish batches to ensure it is evenly chopped.) Add vegetables along with olive oil and herbs and spices to a heavy bottomed [non-reactive pan](#) over medium low heat. Cook, stirring frequently, for at least 1 hour (2 is better) or until the mixture smells sweet and takes on a golden caramelized color. Add in the tomato paste and cook for another 10 minutes, continuing to stir. Remove the sachet and discard.

You can keep the sofrito in the fridge for up to a week.

## **Bolognese Sauce**

2 pounds Ground Grass-fed Beef

.25 pounds Ground or finely diced pancetta (somewhat optional)

1 cup white wine

1.5 cup sofrito

2 cups chicken or beef stock

Salt and Pepper

Brown the beef and pancetta in a small amount of olive oil and deglaze with the white wine. Cook the wine off and add the soffrito and chicken stock. Simmer for 5 or so minutes. Chill or finish (see below) and serve immediately.

### **To Finish the Sauce** (Per Two Cups of finished Bolognese Sauce)

2 oz Heavy Cream

Rough chopped fresh mint leaves (I like a healthy amount)

Crushed peeled tomatoes (to your liking if you feel you want the sauce a bit more “tomato-ey”)

### **To Serve and Garnish**

This is a sauce meant to be generously tossed with your cooked pasta (never just spooned on top.) Cook your pasta and combine with what you see as the right amount of sauce, reserve some pasta water and use to keep the pasta moist.

We finish with a spoonful of ricotta cheese, grated Pecorino Romano (a dry sheep’s milk cheese similar to Parmigiano), more fresh mint and a generous dose of quality Tuscan olive oil.

Pour yourself a big glass of Chianti Classico and enjoy!



*Enjoy a hearty glass of red wine and a salad with this recipe for Bolognese Sauce. Photo by Jamie Jaye Fletcher.*

***To learn more about Sam's restaurant and Snowmass Ski Resort, visit their [website](#). Aspen Ski Company hosted the Traveling Bornsteins' 3-night stay at the Limelight Hotel, 3-days of lift tickets, and meals.***

***— Story by Sandy Bornstein. Photos, except where noted, by The Traveling Bornsteins***



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# Bolognese Sauce with Sofrito

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MOUNTAIN RESTAURANT, SNOWMASS, CO.





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**Author: Sandy Bornstein**

<https://thetravelingbornsteins.com>

Sandy has visited more than 40 countries and lived as an international teacher in Bangalore, India. Sandy’s award-winning book, *May This Be the Best Year of Your Life*, is a resource for people contemplating an expat lifestyle and living outside their comfort zone. Sandy writes about food, family, intergenerational, and active midlife adventures highlighting land and water experiences, historical sites, and Jewish culture and history. You can follow Sandy on Facebook and Instagram.

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