

Tender Turkey Meatballs



Preparation time: 60 min

Difficulty: Easy

Ingredients

- 14.5 ounce can of diced tomatoes: 1
- Bread Crumbs: 1/3 cup
- Crushed tomatoes: 13 ounces or a generous one and a half cups
- Dried Oregano: Teaspoon
- Dried bay leaves (remove after cooking): 2
- Egg: 1
- Garlic minced using a microplane zester or pressed in a garlic press: 1 clove
- Grated Parmesan cheese: 1/8 cup
- Green pepper diced: 1
- Ground Turkey 94 Percent Lean: 1 Pound
- Italian flat leaf parsley, chopped fine: 1 Handful
- Low sodium beef or chicken broth: 1/2 Cup
- Medium onion diced: 1
- Olive Oil: None
- Salt and Pepper: To taste
- Small onion, minced using the fine holes of a hand grater: 1/2
- Sugar: Teaspoon

For this recipe we used:

Strained Tomatoes 1 26.46 ounce box



Preparation

These light, juicy meatballs will not disappoint! Perfect for pasta night!

Directions:

1. Instructions for the sauce: Put your favorite sauce on to simmer or use one or two jars of good quality sauce. You need enough sauce to cover the meatballs. Keep it on a gentle boil. If you're going to make my sauce then start by sauteing the onion and green pepper in a large pot with some olive oil, salt and pepper. Once the onion and pepper are soft, add the tomato products, a splash or two of vermouth, beef broth, bay leaves, oregano and sugar. Season with salt and pepper to taste and bring to a gentle boil. Turn down the heat, cover, and keep on a gentle simmer. Let simmer for at least 20 minutes for the flavors to combine. Stir from time to time. As the sauce is cooking, proceed with making the meatballs.
2. Instructions for the meatballs: Grate the onion and garlic into a large bowl using the smallest holes on a box grater, add all the other ingredients up to and including the salt and pepper. Be careful with how much salt you add because Parmesan cheese tends to be salty. Gently mix to combine. Form the meat mixture into small walnut sized balls. Heat a non-stick skillet on medium high heat with some olive oil. Drop the meatballs in the skillet and pan fry until browned on both sides. Don't crowd the pan. Fry in batches if you have to. There's no need to cook the center of the meatballs because they will finish cooking in the sauce. Once the meatballs are all browned on both sides, drop them into the simmering sauce. Make sure the sauce is at a gentle boil. Cook the meatballs in the sauce for about 10-15 minutes or until done in the centers. They don't take long. You want them to be cooked but still juicy. You may wish to deglaze the pan that the meatballs were cooked in with a little vermouth or wine, scraping up the browned bits. Add the deglazing liquid to the simmering tomato sauce. It gives great flavor. Serve the meatballs and sauce sprinkled with chopped flat leaf parsley. Crusty bread, polenta or pasta make great sidekicks. You can also place the meatballs and sauce in an oven safe pan, top with shredded mozzarella and bake or broil until the cheese is bubbly and melted. Enjoy!

Some Notes:

Form the meat mixture into small walnut-sized balls. The small size ensures they will cook up quickly in the sauce. Resist the urge to overcook them. I have faith you can do this. Cooking them too long in the tomato sauce

leads to dry meatballs. First, they're browned in a pan. The browning gives great flavor. Then they're quickly finished in the tomato sauce. They take about 10 minutes to finish cooking in the simmering sauce.

Grated onion is the key ingredient to moist meatballs. Don't skip it. Don't worry, the onion flavor is not overpowering.

Just a little bit of grated Parmesan cheese gives more moisture to the meatballs and a nutty back note. You're free to add more cheese. But I try to keep them on the lighter side.