Meatballs

Description

These are the very best meatballs ever! Yum, yum, yummy - very garlicky.

The secret to making these plump, round meatballs is to brown them well in oil and then cook them at a gentle simmer in the tomato sauce (for the spaghetti), which keeps the heart of each meatball tender and moist. The thickened sauce also marries well with the spaghetti, easily clinging to the strands.

Summary

Yield: 8
Source: Williams-Sonoma Pasta Cookbook
Prep Time: 1 hour
Category: Meats

Ingredients

- 2 large eggs
- 1/4 cup Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- 3 cloves garlic (large), minced
- 6 sprigs fresh flat-leaf (Italian) parsley
- 1 lb ground beef
- 1/2 cup plain breadcrumbs
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp freshly ground pepper

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- 1/2 cup olive oil, plus 1T for frying the meatball 'nugget'

Instructions

1. In a small bowl, use a fork to beat the eggs until blended. Then, finely grate the cheese using the small grating holes of a box grater-shredder or a rasp grater. Mince the garlic and parsley. Place the garlic clove on a work surface, firmly press against it with the flat side of a chef's knife, and pull away the papery skin. Use the knife to mince the garlic. Wipe the board and knife clean, then remove the leaves from the parsley sprigs and discard the stems. Using the chef's knife, and holding down the knife tip with one hand, mince the leaves, moving he blade up and down. Measure out 3T of the minced parsley.

2. In a large bowl, combine the beef, bread crumbs, eggs, cheese, garlic, parsley, salt, and pepper. Using a wooden spoon or our hands, mix together the ingredients just until well blended. Use a light hand when you're doing this, as squeezing the meat mixture too much can result in tough meatballs.

3. To check the seasonings, it's a good idea to fry a small nugget of the meatball mixture to get a better sense of how it will taste when it's fully cooked. Heat the 1T olive oil in a small frying pan over medium heat until it apears to shimmer. Place a small spoonful of the mixture in the pan and cook until browned on both sides, about 3 minutes. Using tongs, remove the nugget from the pan and transfer to a plate. When it has cooled slightly, taste it and evaluate the seasongs. If you feel it tastes a little flat, mix a small amount of salt or pepper into the remaining meat mixture.

4. The easiest way to portion uniform meatballs is to use a spring-action ice cream scoop about 2 inches in diameter or a 1/3 cup dry measuring cup. As you scoop, place each meatball portion on a

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rimmed baking sheet lined with parchment (baking) paper.

5. Moisten your hands with cool water to prevent the mixture from sticking to them and roll ech meatball portion between your palms to form a ball. Return the ball to the baking sheet and repeat with the remaining portions, always moistening your hands before you shape each ball. Remember to handle the meat mixture lightly. If you pack or squeeze it, the meatballs could be tough and dry.

6. Place a large saute pan over medium heat and add the 1/2 cup olive oil. When the oil appears to shimmer, it is sufficiently hot. Add only as many meatballs to the pan as will fit comfortably without touching one another. (If they are too tightly packed, the meatballs will steam, rather than brown.) Cook the meatballs, turning them frequently with tongs, until they are crusty and dark brown on all surfaces, about 15 minutes total. As the meatballs are ready, transfer them to a plate. Repeat the browning process with the remaining meatballs, letting the pan heat up again slightly between batches.

7. Add meatballs to some spaghetti sauce using a large spoon to baste them. (this is optional of course if you are not having spaghetti)

Notes
Chef's tip:

To make your own dried bread crumbs, dry slices of French or Italian bread on a baking sheet in a 200 degree oven for about 1 hour. Let the slices cool, break them into small pieces, and then pulse them in a food processor until they form fine crumbs.