



ALPHA OMEGA

Italian Meatball Parm

Chef Jesse McQuarrie
Executive Chef/President, Mission Kitchen + Bar

Yield: 16 meatballs, serves 4 to 6

Ingredients:

Meatballs

3 slices white bread (stale is fine)
1/3 cup milk
1 pound ground pork or veal
1 pound ground beef
1/2 cup finely chopped onion
1 1/4 cups finely grated Parmesan, preferably Parmigiano-Reggiano
1/4 cup chopped parsley
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 tablespoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon black pepper
Olive oil, for frying
5 cups tomato sauce
1/2 pound fresh mozzarella, torn into bite-sized pieces



Heat oven to 400.

Remove crusts from bread slices and discard.

Tear remaining bread into small pieces and place in a small bowl. Pour milk over bread and let stand until liquid is almost absorbed, 5 to 10 minutes.

This is called a panade.

In a large bowl, combine pork or veal, beef, panade, onion, 1/4 cup Parmesan, parsley, garlic, salt and the pepper until just combined. Form meat into golf-ball-size rounds.

Meatballs can be formed up to 24 hours ahead, covered and refrigerated before frying, or frozen for future use.

Fill a large skillet (preferably cast iron) with 1/4-inch oil. Place over medium-high heat.

When oil is hot, fry meatballs in batches, turning occasionally, until golden brown, 8 to 10 minutes per batch. Transfer fried meatballs to a paper towel-lined plate or cookie sheet.

Spoon a thin layer of sauce over the bottom of a 9-by-13-inch baking pan. Sprinkle one-third of the Parmesan over sauce. Scatter half the meatballs over the Parmesan and top with half the mozzarella pieces. Top with half of the remaining sauce, sprinkle with another third of the Parmesan, and repeat layering, ending with a final layer of sauce and Parmesan.

Transfer pan to oven and bake until cheese is golden and casserole is bubbling, about 40 minutes. Let cool a few minutes before serving.

Tomato Sauce

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
¼ teaspoon red chile flakes (optional)
2 (28-ounce) cans whole or diced plum tomatoes
2 sprigs basil or 1 bay leaf
½ teaspoon kosher salt, or to taste
¼ teaspoon black pepper

In a large, straight-sided skillet over medium heat, warm the oil. Add garlic and cook until just lightly golden. Add chile flakes if desired and cook 30 seconds.

Stir in tomatoes and juices, basil or bay leaf, and salt and pepper.

Bring sauce to a simmer and cook until sauce is thick and tomatoes have mostly fallen apart, about 30 to 40 minutes. Adjust heat as needed to keep at a steady simmer. If using whole plum tomatoes, mash them up with the back of a wooden spoon or a potato masher to help them break down. Remove sauce from heat and discard basil or bay leaf.

Enjoy!