



## BASIC MEATBALLS



### Ingredients

- 1 ½ pounds ground beef
- 3 slices white bread, made into crumbs
- 1 Tablespoon parsley, finely chopped (or 2 teaspoons dried parsley)
- 2/3 cup milk or dairy alternative
- 1 large egg or egg substitute
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 teaspoons granulated garlic
- ½ cup parmesan or parmesan/romano blend (optional)

### Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients in a bowl until well combined but don't overmix or the meatballs may be tough when cooked. Tough meatballs are not tasty!
2. Make into the size meatballs you want – small, medium, or large, depending on how you want to serve them. If making a quantity, you might want different sizes.
3. Fry in a skillet or bake on a baking sheet in a 350 degrees F oven until done, depends on the size of the meatballs. Don't overcook, they will be too dry. If frying and you have a leaner meat add a little vegetable oil in the skillet. Dry meatballs are not very tasty.

### NOTES FROM CHEF:

Recipe may be doubled or tripled. If the texture of the meat seems too dry add a little more milk, if too wet, add more breadcrumbs. Once these are formed, they may be frozen for a later date. So, if you get the ground beef on sale, it might be a good idea to buy more than 1-2 pounds and have these on hand.

It's great to use ground chicken or turkey or bison, or even a vegetarian "meat" for these.

If you have and enjoy the flavors, add 1/3 cup minced onion and maybe some diced green bell pepper. If you want a Tex-Mex flavor for some of the meatballs, add some chili powder and ground cumin. If making Asian meatballs, add some ground ginger.

It's a nice idea to make different flavors if you're making a larger quantity than you'll use at the time. Just make sure you label them when you put them in the freezer, or you might have ginger meatballs with spaghetti – hehe (maybe it would be tasty, hmmm).

## **MEATBALLS AND SPAGHETTI**



If making spaghetti, or other pasta, and meatballs, make meatballs as for Basic Meatballs. Add the meatballs you want to serve with pasta into the marinara sauce (recipe below or use your favorite jar of marinara sauce) and let simmer 10 minutes.

Cook the pasta per package directions. Add pasta into the sauce and meatballs to coat the pasta. Serve topped with dry parmesan cheese if desired and you have on hand. AWESOME! I'm getting hungry.

### **NOTES FROM CHEF:**

I like medium sized meatballs for serving with pasta. I usually serve 2-3 meatballs per person.

Heavier pasta like macaroni or curly noodles, even thick noodles are not especially good with a light marinara sauce and meatballs.

This is an economical dinner and is good for large groups as well as for one. Ground beef is often on sale where I shop. Ground chicken or turkey is often cheaper than beef. I don't use a

lot of vegetarian products for dishes, but I have seen them in the store, and I know they are delicious!

Pasta is very economical – last time I bought spaghetti it was \$0.99 for a package to feed 10-12 people.

You can perk up the flavor with Italian seasonings if you have them, oregano, basil, garlic, an Italian blend. Here is my favorite marinara sauce if I'm making it "from scratch" but I often buy a large jar of marinara sauce at the grocery store, keep it in my pantry and if I don't use the entire jar, I freeze the rest for another time. I paid \$1.19 for the last jar I bought. So, you can feed a lot of people for little and it's a delicious, filling, healthy meal.

I like to buy a loaf of fresh French bread in the bakery department for \$0.99 when it's on sale.

## MARINARA SAUCE



This is a favorite recipe of mine and I usually buy large cans of crushed tomatoes when they are on sale. Since I don't serve in quantity much anymore, I often cut the recipe in thirds and make a small batch. However, it does freeze well also! Just make sure it is in a well-sealed container. It's easy and I call it my "kitchen therapy" time – 😊 – when I need to do something creative, constructive, and can feel extremely proud of and get to enjoy when I'm finished!

### Ingredients

1/3 cup olive oil (the expensive kind is not necessary here)

6 cloves garlic, minced, or I use a lot of garlic powder – 1 Tablespoon if using dry

3 26-oz. cans crushed tomatoes

1 teaspoon oregano

1 teaspoon basil

Salt and pepper to taste

2 Tablespoon butter or margarine

## Instructions

1. Combine and cook at a simmer on the stove top for 7-10 minutes, taste and adjust seasoning.
2. Turn heat off and stir in butter. Enjoy!

## MEATBALL SANDWICH



Now that you have all your ingredients ready, you can make a meatball sandwich if you want. I love meatball sandwiches. You can add any condiments you like – like yellow mustard (don't knock it if you haven't tried it 😊), or a melting white cheese is delicious! Add lots of sauce or very little. I like to use either a hot dog bun or a sandwich bun but they equally as good on bread, just be careful or the bread will absorb the sauce and you'll have to eat it with a fork. Of course, there is nothing wrong with that either!

## SWEET N' SOUR MEATBALLS



I'm including these because they are a huge favorite in my family. Same meatballs, different sauce and is also great for a themed meal – like Asian, Hawaiian, even Mediterranean if you choose.

You've already got the meatballs. So, with the meatballs warm, make the sauce ...

Mix together 2 Tablespoons cornstarch, ½ cup brown sugar (I use light brown sugar, but dark is fine too)

Drain 1 can pineapple tidbits and pour the syrup into the cornstarch and brown sugar mixture, adding 1/3 cup apple cider vinegar, 1 Tablespoon soy sauce and mix together. Pour into a skillet

and stir often while cooking on medium heat. When sauce is slightly thickened, add the meatballs and pineapple and 1/3 cup chopped green bell pepper. Stir.

I prefer to serve with cooked rice, but your choice.

When I had my catering business this was a very popular request. I've been making these for about 54 years now! They truly are that delicious! Please ENJOY!

#### **NOTES FROM THE CHEF:**

When you are making the meatballs for the Sweet n' Sour Meatballs, you might want to add some ginger to the meat mixture before cooking the meatballs. Little tweak to the flavor to go with the sweet n' sour.

When I make these, I usually make smaller meatballs and make enough for at least 5 per person. Not necessary and if you are stretching the dollar for a large group, 3 is plenty.

You can double or triple the sauce which I often do – not necessarily the pineapple and pepper, but the sauce itself, it goes further, and the taste is not at all affected.

I do not add cheese to this version. If you want to garnish, a little fresh or dry parsley on top is a nice touch.

I always make a lot of rice – any leftover rice can be made into a rice pudding . . . another day!



**Recipes by: Granni K**