
Meatballs

Several meals worth

Ingredients

1 small onion
250g beef mince
1 thick slice stale bread
1 tsp oregano
1 tsp chili flakes
2 cloves garlic
1 tbs tomato purée
2 tins tomatoes or 1 jar passata

Equipment

medium saucepan with lid

Method

Finely chop half the onion and slightly soften it in a little oil; about 5 minutes over low heat. At the end add one (finely chopped) clove of garlic, for about one minute. This is to make sure that there's none of the raw taste remaining.

Mix the onion, garlic, mince and the bread (broken into small cubes or crumbs), season with a large pinch of salt and some pepper, and shape into small meat balls. The balls should be about 2-3 cm, no larger.

Brown the meatballs over a medium heat. Put them to one side, and soften the remaining onion and garlic; 5-10 minutes. It's best to add the garlic for only the last minute, so that it doesn't burn; burnt garlic has a distinctive taste that isn't good in this sort of cooking. Add the chili, oregano, tomato paste and tomatoes or passata. Add the meatballs and season (0.5 - 1 tsp salt, a good grind of pepper), then taste. Simmer, covered, for at least 40 minutes.

Serve with pasta or rice. Save any leftovers for pasta sauce or making sub sandwiches.

Variations

Mix 50/50 beef and pork mince.

Use 50% beef mince and 50% sausage meat (split open a couple of good quality sausages; flavoured ones work well for this). The bread shouldn't be needed for this mix.

Flavour the meatballs with some different herbs: fresh thyme or a very little sage, or parsley. Perhaps a teaspoon of finely grated lemon zest (with the parsley).

A small handful of grated parmesan in the meatballs.
