

Mike's Favorite

Naughty 'n' Nice Meatballs

(Cream Balls and Polpetta)

From **FOODHEIM: A Culinary Adventure** by Eric Wareheim (Author), Emily Timberlake

Servings: Makes About 20 Meatballs (4 Servings)



Ingredients

Meatballs

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
½ yellow onion, finely diced
½ pound ground beef
½ pound ground pork
1 egg
¼ cup milk
½ cup bread crumbs
2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley
2 garlic cloves, grated
1½ teaspoons freshly ground fennel seeds
1½ teaspoons kosher salt
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

“Nice” Version

½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
Chopped fresh parsley for garnish

“Naughty” Version

½ cup unsalted butter
¼ cup all-purpose flour
2 cups beef broth
½ cup white wine
1 egg yolk
¼ cup sour cream
¼ cup capers, drained
Juice of ½ lemon
1 teaspoon kosher salt

Directions

To make the meatballs:

In a medium skillet over medium heat, warm the olive oil, then add the onion and sauté until it is translucent, about 5 minutes. Set aside to cool slightly.

In a large bowl, combine the cooled onion with the beef, pork, egg, milk, bread crumbs, parsley, garlic, fennel seeds, salt, and pepper and mix by hand until well incorporated. Form the mixture into 1/2-inch balls and set aside on plates or a baking sheet.

For the “nice” version:

In a large cast-iron skillet over medium-low heat, warm the olive oil. Test for seasoning by tearing off and frying a small piece from one of the meatballs. Eat your tester and adjust the seasoning as needed.

Working in batches so as not to crowd the pan, fry the meatballs, rotating every minute or so to brown all sides (lean the balls on each other to get the right angles), about 8 minutes. The meatballs should be crisp on the outside and juicy on the inside (cut one in half to test). Garnish with parsley before serving.

For the “naughty” version:

In a Dutch oven or a large, heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter. Add the flour and immediately start whisking vigorously. Cook, whisking continuously, until the mixture is a light golden color, 2 to 3 minutes.

Slowly pour the beef broth into the flour mixture, while whisking, until the sauce is well integrated, then stir in the wine. Bring to a low simmer and cook until the sauce has thickened slightly, stirring occasionally and making sure to scrape the bottom, about 10 minutes.

Add the meatballs to the sauce and return to a low simmer. Cover the pan, turn the heat to low, and cook until the meatballs are cooked through (cut one in half to test), 15 to 20 minutes.

Using a slotted spoon, transfer the meatballs to a serving bowl, then remove the sauce from the heat. In a small bowl, whisk together the egg yolk, sour cream, and capers. Add to the sauce and stir to combine.

Season the sauce with the lemon juice, salt, and a sprinkling of pepper, then pour over the meatballs and serve. No garnish here-EMBRACE THE BEIGE!