

Recipe for:

SMOKEY MEATBALL PASTA BAKE

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 25 minutes

Makes: 4 PORTIONS

Ingredients

500 g minced beef/Vegetarian Meatballs
1 small ciabatta loaf
1 shallot finely diced
1 garlic clove peeled and minced
60 g breadcrumbs
1 medium egg
1 tsp Italian dried herbs of oregano and thyme
1 tsp vegetable oil
Pasta:
250 g dried pasta
Smoky Sauce:
400 g tinned chopped tomatoes or passata
75 ml beef/vegetable stock
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp smoked paprika
Also:
80 g grated Cheddar cheese
30 g grated mozzarella
salt and pepper to taste
chopped parsley to garnish

Equipment

Measuring Spoons
Measuring Jug
1 Baking Tray
Grater
Garlic Crusher
Sauce Pan with heat source
Wooden Spoon
Heat Proof Dish
Scales for weighing

Description



Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 200C/400F
2. Start by making the meatballs. Place the minced beef, shallot, garlic, breadcrumbs egg, dried herbs and a pinch of salt and pepper in a bowl and mix together to combine.
3. Lightly grease a large baking dish with the vegetable oil, then form the mince mixture into 12 small meatballs. Place in the prepared baking dish.
4. Place the meatballs in the oven and cook for 15 minutes until browned. Or brown in a flat bottom pan for 15 minutes moving around gently with fork.
5. Meanwhile, cook the pasta according to the pack instructions (usually boil in plenty of water for approx 12-14 minutes). Drain the pasta once cooked.
6. Make the smoky sauce by mixing the tinned tomatoes/passata, liquid stock, Worcestershire sauce, paprika and a pinch of salt and pepper together in a jug or bowl.
7. Remove the meatballs from the oven. Nestle the cooked pasta in between the meatballs (I like to leave some bits of pasta sticking up to get a few crunchy bits) and pour over the sauce.
8. Sprinkle on the cheddar and mozzarella and place bake in the oven for 10 minutes until the cheese has melted and started bubbling.
9. Top with a little freshly chopped parsley and serve with green veggies or salad.

Notes

Leftovers:

Leftovers can be kept in an airtight container in the fridge for up to two days. Cool completely before placing in the fridge.

Reheating:

Reheat by covering with foil and placing in the oven at 180C/350F for 15-20 minutes until piping hot throughout.

Freezing:

You can also cover and freeze this dish for up to 3 months. Defrost thoroughly before reheating as per above.

Gluten free modifications:

You can make the dish gluten free by swapping the breadcrumbs and pasta for gluten free versions. If using stock, use a gluten free stock cube or bouillon. Worcestershire sauce and passata/tinned tomatoes are usually gluten free, but check your brand.

Vegetarian modifications - see vegetarian meatball recipe. Feel free also to add extra vegetables such as broccoli and aubergines for a meaty texture.

Vegan meatballs



Prep: 25 mins

Cook: 1 hr

plus chilling



Easy



Serves 4



Ingredients

30g dried porcini mushrooms

3 tbsp olive oil

1 onion , very finely chopped

2 garlic cloves , crushed

1 tsp sweet smoked paprika

1 x 400g can black beans , drained and rinsed

50g rolled oats

2 tbsp brown rice miso

50g fresh breadcrumbs

spaghetti or soft polenta, to serve

For the tomato sauce

2 tbsp olive oil

1 onion , very finely chopped

1 large garlic clove , crushed

Small pinch of chilli flakes

2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes

1 tbsp soft brown sugar

½ small bunch of basil , finely chopped

Method

Step 1 Tip the dried porcini into a bowl and cover with boiling water. Leave to soak for 20 mins.

Step 2 Meanwhile heat 1 tbsp of olive oil a frying pan. Add the onion and fry over a low heat for 10 mins or until softened and translucent. Add the garlic and paprika and cook for 1 min.

Step 3 Tip the black beans and oats into a food processor and blitz until you have a chunky, textured mixture. Tip the beans into a mixing bowl and stir through the miso, breadcrumbs and cooked onion mix. Strain and finely chop the porcini mushrooms and add those (keep the liquid for soup or risottos). Season and roll into 12 balls and chill in the fridge while you make the sauce.

Step 4 Heat 2 tbsp oil in a saucepan. Add the onion and fry over a low heat for 10 mins or until softened and translucent. Add the garlic and chilli and cook for 1 min. Stir through the tomatoes and sugar and season to taste. Simmer uncovered for 20 mins.

Step 5 Heat the oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Heat the remaining 2 tbsp oil for the meatballs in a non-stick frying pan over a medium heat. Add the balls and fry for 5 mins until evenly brown. Transfer to a baking tray and put in the oven to cook through for 12 mins.

Step 6 Add the cooked meatballs to the pan of sauce and toss everything to coat, then scatter with the basil. Serve with spaghetti or soft polenta.