

Greek Meatballs

By Lidey Heuck

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Total Time 1¼ hours

Prep Time 15 minutes

Cook Time 30 minutes, plus at least 30 minutes' chilling

Rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ (719)



Christopher Testani for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Simon Andrews.

These meatballs are inspired by keftedes, a traditional Greek meatball made with beef and sometimes pork or lamb and seasoned with a mix of herbs and spices. While variations of keftedes abound, many include fresh bread crumbs, grated onion and tomato, along with lots of fresh mint and parsley. The tomato lends the meatballs a hint of sweetness and acidity, and also helps make them incredibly moist and tender. While not traditional, this recipe opts for panko instead of fresh bread crumbs, for ease. Rather than being softened with milk to form a panade, the bread crumbs go into the meatball mix on their own and soak up the flavorful juices from the onion and tomato. Serve these meatballs with homemade [tzatziki](#), a [simple salad](#) and pita on the side, or in [tomato sauce](#) for a hearty, comforting dinner.

INGREDIENTS

Yield: About 30 meatballs (4 to 6 servings)

½ cup (lightly packed) grated red or yellow onion (from about ½ large onion)

1 medium tomato, grated (about 5 ounces)

1 pound lean ground beef

½ pound ground lamb or pork

½ cup panko bread crumbs

1 large egg, lightly beaten

⅓ cup finely chopped fresh mint

⅓ cup finely chopped fresh parsley

PREPARATION

Step 1

Place the grated onion and tomato in a fine-mesh sieve over the sink and stir a few times, pressing on the mixture to drain the excess liquid. (Some moisture should remain; do not squeeze in a dish towel.) Transfer the remaining onion and tomato to a large bowl.

Step 2

Add the beef, lamb, panko, egg, mint, parsley, garlic, oregano, coriander and cumin, plus 1½ teaspoons salt and ½ teaspoon pepper; mix gently but thoroughly.

Step 3

Using a 2 tablespoon-scoop or two spoons, form meatballs that are about 1½ inches wide. Place them on a plate, cover and chill

2 large garlic cloves, grated or very finely minced

1 teaspoon dried oregano

1 teaspoon ground coriander

½ teaspoon ground cumin

Salt and pepper

¼ cup olive oil

Tzatziki, salad and pita (all optional), for serving

for at least 30 minutes, and up to 24 hours, to allow the meatballs to firm up.

Step 4

In a large (12-inch) skillet, heat the oil over medium-high. When the oil is hot (it should sizzle immediately if you drop a bread crumb into the pan), fry the meatballs in 2 to 3 batches, flipping occasionally and lowering the heat as necessary to prevent them from getting too dark, until browned all over and just cooked through, 5 to 7 minutes.

Step 5

Transfer the cooked meatballs to a paper towel-lined plate, and serve hot or warm with any combination of tzatziki, salad and pita, if desired.

Private Notes

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