

Meatballs With Garlic-Mint Sauce

For the Meatballs:

1 1/2 pounds ground chuck
3 eggs
8 tablespoons grated Parmesan
4 tablespoons fine, dry breadcrumbs
1/2 cup fresh, soft breadcrumbs or panko
1 large onion minced
3 cloves garlic minced
1/2 cup of minced parsley
3/4 cup of minced fresh mint
1 teaspoon of fresh or dried thyme
Enough milk to moisten the fresh breadcrumbs, about 1/4 cup or less
Salt and freshly ground pepper

For the Mint Sauce:

1 cup of fresh mint leaves
4 cloves of chopped garlic
1/2 to 3/4 cup virgin olive oil
salt and pepper to taste
A bit of water to thin the sauce

Soak the fresh breadcrumbs in just enough milk to moisten them. Mix all the ingredients for the meatballs in a large bowl with your hands. Knead until the mixture is combined and smooth, but don't over mix. Take a heaping teaspoon of the mixture and flatten into a patty. Fry it in oil and taste for seasoning. If necessary, add more salt, pepper, cheese or herbs to suit your taste. When you've arrived at the taste you like, roll the meatballs in the palm of your hands until they are smooth. Mine are generally about 1 1/2 inches in diameter.

In the meantime, prepare the mint sauce. Using a mortar and pestle, pound the mint and the garlic together until it forms a paste. It will not be smooth. Gradually beat in the olive oil, salt, and pepper to taste. Add just enough cold water to reach a consistency you like. More water gives a milder taste.

Fry the meatballs in oil until nicely browned on all sides. Serve the meatballs, allowing guests to spoon their desired amount of sauce over their cut meatballs.