

February Recipe – Italian Meatballs

Meatballs are an Italian staple, and I'm always questing to find good ones in restaurants. Easier said than done, sadly. This recipe is my favorite – quick, easy and delicious. It's adapted from Marcella Hazan's ESSENTIALS OF ITALIAN COOKING – my Italian cooking bible.

Ingredients:

- 1 slice good-quality white bread
- 1/3 cup skim milk
- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 1 tablespoon white onion, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- 1 egg
- 3 tablespoons freshly grated parmigiano-reggiano cheese (asiago works well, too)
- Dash of nutmeg
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Fine, dry, Italian bread crumbs on a plate (if you're gluten-free, Kellogg's Corn Flake Breadcrumbs work wonderfully too, and you can adjust the earlier bread slice to gluten-free as well)
- EVOO
- Mezzetta Napa Valley Bistro Tomato Basil – or your own sauce. (Mezzetta's is the closest to my homemade sauces I've ever found)
- Spaghetti or your choice of pasta, cooked al dente

Directions:

Trim away bread crust, put milk and bread in small pan over low heat. When bread has soaked up the milk, remove from heat and set aside.

Mix meat, onion, parsley, the egg, a tablespoon of olive oil and a tiny grating of nutmeg. Add the bread and milk mush, and liberal amounts of salt and pepper. (It's easier to mix the ingredients, then add the meat and gently knead them together.)

Roll into balls - choose your size, natch - then roll in breadcrumbs. Add the meatballs to a sauté pan of hot EVOO and brown on all sides.

Drain off the fat and add the tomato sauce to the pan. Cover and simmer on low for 25 minutes.

Serve over pasta of your choice, and enjoy!