

Choco Fever Dream

Baked Meatballs – Authentic Italian Recipe

15 min Prep time	**25 min** Cook time	**40 min** Total time
4 Servings	**Easy** Difficulty	**Italian** Cuisine

Ingredients

Meatball Mix

- [ ] 1 lb ground beef (80% lean)
- [ ] 1/2 cup breadcrumbs
- [ ] 1/4 cup milk
- [ ] 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- [ ] 1 large egg
- [ ] 2 garlic cloves, minced
- [ ] 2 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped
- [ ] 1 tbsp fresh basil, chopped
- [ ] 1 tsp lemon zest
- [ ] 1 tsp salt
- [ ] 1/2 tsp black pepper
- [ ] 2 tbsp olive oil (for brushing)

Optional Dipping Sauce

- [ ] 1 cup marinara sauce
- [ ] A drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper; this keeps the meatballs from sticking.
2. In a small bowl, combine breadcrumbs and milk; let sit for 2 minutes until softened.
3. In a large mixing bowl, gently combine ground beef, softened breadcrumbs, Parmesan, egg, garlic, herbs, lemon zest, salt, and pepper. Mix just until everything is incorporated—over-mixing makes them dense.
4. Roll the mixture into 1-inch balls; place them on the prepared sheet, leaving a little space between each.
5. Brush the tops lightly with olive oil; this helps the crust turn golden. Bake for 20-25 minutes, turning halfway, until they are browned and an internal temperature of 160°F (71°C) is reached.
6. Remove from oven, let rest a minute, then serve with warm marinara or a drizzle of olive oil. Parmesan lovers will adore the cheesy bite.

Nutrition per serving

250 kcal	18 g	10 g	15 g
Calories	Protein	Carbs	Fat

Tips & notes

- If you prefer a spicier kick, add a pinch of red pepper flakes to the meat mixture.
- For extra flavor, toast the breadcrumbs lightly before mixing with milk.
- A quick tip: keep a bowl of cold water nearby to dip your hands—makes shaping smoother.