

Italian Meatballs with Garlic Bread

Ingredients

Roasted Meatballs:

- 1 cup breadcrumbs
- Nutmeg, for grating
- 2/3 cup whole milk
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1/2 pound ground pork
- Salt and pepper
- A handful of flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup Pecorino Romano cheese
- 1 teaspoon fennel seed
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 large egg
- 4 tablespoons Olive oil

Sauce:

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- One 14-ounce can crushed Italian tomatoes
- One 24-ounce jar, 3 cups, tomato passata or puree
- A few leaves basil, torn
- Salt
- A sprinkle of sugar

Garlic Bread:

4 tablespoons butter
2-3 tablespoons olive oil
4 cloves garlic, minced
A loaf of Italian bread or ciabatta
About 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
A handful flat-leaf parsley, chopped

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees F with rack at center. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. For the meatballs: Pour breadcrumbs in a small bowl, add a few grates of nutmeg and add milk. Toss and let the milk absorb.
3. Place the meats in a large mixing bowl, season with salt and pepper, combine them and make a well. Rip off some parsley tops and finely chop; add to meats. Peel garlic and mince. Pour in cheeses, sprinkle on fennel and red pepper flakes. Add egg and olive oil. Combine the mixture. Form into 24 meatballs and place on parchment; roast 15 to 18 minutes.
4. For the sauce: Meanwhile, in a medium Dutch oven or a deep cast-iron skillet heat olive oil, and melt butter into oil. When it foams, add garlic and stir 1 minute. Add crushed tomatoes and passata and bring to a bubble. Stir in basil leaves. Reduce heat on sauce a bit and let it bubble away 15 minutes. Add salt and sugar if needed.
5. For the garlic bread: While sauce and meatballs are cooking, heat olive oil in a small pot or pan over medium heat and melt butter into it. Crush and grate garlic into butter and remove from heat. Split bread and add to oven a rack below the meatballs. Toast 5 minutes. Remove and brush with all the garlic and oil, top with cheese and chop a little parsley to sprinkle on top. Return to oven, warm another 3 minutes to set, remove.
6. Remove meatballs from oven, and place into sauce.

7. Serve meatballs in rimmed plates or shallow bowls and add cut garlic bread for the mopping.
