

Meatballs 101

Everyone should know how to make meatballs, or polpette in Italian. It's an easy recipe using inexpensive ingredients, spiced to your desire, that is comforting to eat. Make a big batch one day and save some for something completely different the next. Eat them plain, served in a soup, simmered in a sauce, or stuffed in a sandwich. They are also a great catchall for little bits and pieces you may have hanging around the kitchen: nuts, seeds, pickles, grated cheese, leftover stuffing or cooked grains or veggies etc. all go great in meatballs.

Turkey Quinoa Meatballs

Leftover quinoa easily replaces traditional breadcrumbs in these gluten-free meatballs. I use turkey in this recipe, but it will work just as well with any ground meat, or even a combination. Try these with a Marinara Sauce or instead of baking them in the oven, simmer the browned balls in your favorite tomato sauce, covered, for 45 minutes.

3/4 cup cooked quinoa

1/2 onion, grated

1 egg, lightly beaten

1 Tbsp Dijon mustard

1/3 cup grated Parmesan

1 Tbsp fresh or 1 tsp dried oregano 1 tsp dried savory

1 tsp garlic powder

1 Tbsp fresh thyme

1 tsp chili powder or chili flakes (optional)

1 lb ground turkey (see substitutions)

1 tsp salt

Pepper

1–2 Tbsp oil, divided

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.

2. In a large bowl, stir together the cooled cooked quinoa, onion, egg, mustard, Parmesan, oregano, savory, garlic powder, thyme, and chili powder until combined. Add the ground turkey, salt, and pepper, and mix together until combined.

- 3.** Portion the meat into meatballs, about 1/8 cup in size, or flatten them into sliders. Set them aside on a baking sheet.
- 4.** Preheat an ovenproof heavy-bottomed skillet or large cast-iron pan over high heat. Add 1 tablespoon of oil. In batches, cook the meatballs on all sides until browned, about 6 minutes. Avoid overcrowding the pan. Add more oil if necessary.
- 5.** Transfer the pan to the oven. If you don't have an ovenproof skillet, transfer the meatballs to a lined baking sheet. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes or until their internal temperature is 165°F.