

Herbed Beef Meatballs

Recipe courtesy of WestBridge's Chef: Bradley Labarre, CEC, CCA, AAC

Yield: 18–22 medium meatballs (serves 4–6)

Total time: 45–55 minutes (15 min prep, 25–35 min cook)

Ingredients:

Panada:

- 3/4 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 cup panko breadcrumbs
- 1 large egg

Additional Ingredients:

- 1.5 lb (680 g) ground beef (80/20 or 85/15)
- 1 cup panko breadcrumbs (plus 1/2 cup for panada)
- 1 small onion, finely grated or minced (about 1/2 cup)
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh basil, finely chopped (or 1 tsp dried)
- 1 tbsp fresh oregano, finely chopped (or 1 tsp dried)
- 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves (or 1/2 tsp dried)
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1/2–3/4 tsp crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
- 1 tsp smoked paprika (or sweet paprika)
- 1 tsp ground coriander (optional)
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce (optional)
- 2 tbsp grated Parmesan (optional)
- 2 tbsp olive oil (for browning)

Instructions:

1. Make the panada: In a small bowl combine 3/4 cup heavy cream and 1/2 cup panko. Let sit 5 minutes until absorbed and thickened. Stir in the egg until smooth.
2. Combine meatball base: In a large bowl add ground beef, grated onion, garlic, parsley, basil, oregano, thyme, salt, pepper, red pepper

flakes (if using), smoked paprika, coriander (if using), Worcestershire (if using), and Parmesan (if using).

3. Add panada and remaining panko: Pour the panada into the meat mixture and add the remaining 1 cup panko. Gently mix with hands until just combined (avoid overworking).

4. Shape: Form 18–22 meatballs (~1.5 oz / golf-ball size). Place on a tray.

5. Cook (*choose one*):

- Brown + oven finish (recommended): Heat 2 tbsp olive oil in an ovenproof skillet over medium-high. Brown meatballs on all sides (~2–3 minutes per side). Transfer skillet to a 375°F (190°C) oven and bake 10–12 minutes, or until internal temperature reaches 160°F (71°C).
- Pan-fry only: Brown in batches in a skillet over medium heat, then reduce to medium-low, cover, and cook 6–8 minutes until cooked through.
- Simmer in sauce: After browning, transfer meatballs to simmering tomato sauce and cook 15–20 minutes.

6. Rest & serve: Let rest 3–5 minutes. Serve with pasta, in a sub, over polenta, or with your preferred sauce.

Tips

- If mixture feels too wet, add 1 tbsp panko at a time until manageable; if too dry, add a splash of cream or an extra egg yolk.
- Use a light touch when mixing and forming meatballs for tender results.
- Freeze uncooked meatballs on a tray, then transfer to a freezer bag for up to 3 months; cook from frozen, adding a few extra minutes.



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