



VIETNAMESE MEATBALL LETTUCE WRAPS

35 MINUTES

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n Vietnam, meatballs are often skewered and grilled, but for a quick weeknight meal, a skillet does a fine job. You could serve these

over steamed rice or rice vermicelli, but we liked them with herbs and lettuce leaves for wrapping, along with a lime juice and fish sauce mixture for drizzling.

Don't be timid when mixing the pork mixture; you want to vigorously stir it to compact it. This creates a pleasantly springy texture in the meatballs.

INGREDIENTS

3	TEASPOONS GRAPESEED OR OTHER NEUTRAL OIL, DIVIDED
1	POUND GROUND PORK
$\frac{1}{3}$	CUP CHOPPED FRESH CILANTRO LEAVES AND TENDER STEMS, PLUS SPRIGS, TO SERVE
$\frac{1}{2}$	TEASPOON GROUND BLACK PEPPER
6	SCALLIONS, WHITE AND LIGHT GREEN PARTS MINCED, DARK GREEN PARTS THINLY SLICED
5	TABLESPOONS FISH SAUCE, DIVIDED
2	TABLESPOONS PLUS 2 TEASPOONS WHITE SUGAR, DIVIDED
$\frac{1}{2}$	CUP LIME JUICE
1-2	SERRANO CHILIES, STEMMED, SEEDED AND THINLY SLICED
2	MEDIUM CARROTS, PEELED AND SHREDDED (1 CUP)
	LETTUCE LEAVES, TO SERVE

DIRECTIONS

Coat a large plate with 1 teaspoon of the oil; set aside. In a medium bowl, combine the pork, 3 tablespoons water, cilantro, pepper, minced scallions, 2 tablespoons of the fish sauce and the 2 teaspoons

sugar. Mix vigorously with a rubber spatula until thoroughly combined, 20 to 30 seconds. The mixture will be soft and sticky. With lightly moistened hands, form the mixture into 20 balls and place them on the prepared plate. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, stir together the lime juice, the 3 remaining tablespoons fish sauce, the remaining 2 tablespoons sugar and the chilies until the sugar dissolves. Set aside.

Line another plate with paper towels. In a 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium-high, heat the remaining 2 teaspoons oil until beginning to smoke. Add the meatballs and cook undisturbed until the bottoms are golden brown, 1 to 2 minutes. Using a spatula, turn each meatball and continue to cook, adjusting the heat as needed and occasionally turning the meatballs, until golden brown all over, 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer to the prepared plate, tent with foil and let rest 5 minutes.

In a small bowl, toss the shredded carrots with 2 tablespoons of the lime juice sauce. Serve the meatballs with the carrots, cilantro sprigs, sliced scallions and lettuce leaves for wrapping. The remaining sauce can be spooned onto the wraps.