

Vegan Meatballs



Makes 6 servings

Active time: **40 minutes**

Total time: **1 hour 10 minutes**

Course: **Dinner**

For these hearty and healthy vegan meatballs, we've swapped out the traditional ground beef and pork for protein-packed chickpeas and quinoa—without skimping on any of those Italian flavors that you look for in a classic meatball. Mushrooms up the umami factor, and a simple tomato sauce completes the picture. Serve over your favorite pasta.

Ingredients

- 2½ cups small cauliflower florets
- 8 ounces white mushrooms
- ½ small onion
- 2 large cloves garlic
- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1½ teaspoons Italian seasoning
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 cup canned chickpeas
- 2 cups cooked quinoa
- 1 tablespoon reduced-sodium tamari or soy sauce
- 1 28-ounce can no-salt-added crushed tomatoes
- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Coat a large rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray.
2. Pulse cauliflower, mushrooms, onion and 1 garlic clove in a food processor until finely chopped, about 15 pulses. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the cauliflower mixture, ¾ teaspoon Italian seasoning and 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper; cook, stirring, until softened, about 5 minutes. Add tomato paste and cook, stirring, for 1 minute more. Transfer to a large bowl and let cool, stirring a few times, for 5 minutes.
3. Add chickpeas to the food processor; puree until smooth. Add the chickpea mixture to the large bowl along with quinoa and tamari (or soy sauce); stir to combine. Form the mixture into 24 balls (about 2 1/2 tablespoons each) and place on the prepared baking sheet.
4. Bake the meatballs until heated through and firm, 20 to 25 minutes. Let cool on the baking sheet for 3 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, finely chop the remaining garlic clove. Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic, tomatoes, crushed red pepper and the remaining 3/4 teaspoon Italian seasoning and 1/4 teaspoon salt. Bring to a simmer. Cook until the flavors have melded, about 5 minutes. Serve the meatballs with the sauce, sprinkled with basil.

Tips & Notes

Make ahead: The sauce can be made up to 3 days ahead and the meatballs can be made up to 1 day ahead. Refrigerate separately.

Nutrition

Per Serving: 393 calories; 46 g carbohydrates; 17 g fat (2 g sat, g mono); 13 g protein; mg cholesterol; 10 g dietary fiber; 1272 mg potassium; 434 mg sodium.

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