

Cumin Lamb Meatballs With Tahini Yogurt Dipping Sauce

By Melissa Clark

YIELD 2 to 4 servings

TIME 20 minutes

Meatballs are not the kind of thing one would usually think of as quick-and-easy-dinner fare. All that rolling and frying can take forever, making meatballs a weekend project for a leisurely afternoon. There are, however, shortcuts — if you can suppress your perfectionist urges.

You can use this recipe as a template for whatever kind of ground meat you like. Lamb is earthy and works well with the creamy tahini sauce, reminiscent of a carnivore's falafel. But beef, turkey, veal or pork are good substitutes. And all will make equally good blobs and none will be a project. Just a fast and filling dinner any night of the week.

INGREDIENTS

3 garlic cloves, minced
1 ¼ teaspoons coarse kosher salt, plus a pinch
1 pound ground lamb
2 teaspoons cumin seeds
½ teaspoon hot sauce, more for serving
Black pepper, to taste
½ teaspoon chile powder
1 scallion, minced
2 tablespoons finely chopped parsley
Olive oil, for greasing pan
¼ cup plain yogurt
¼ cup tahini
Fresh lemon juice, to taste

PREPARATION

Step 1

Heat broiler with an oven rack placed 3 inches below heat source.

Step 2

Using a mortar and pestle or the flat side of a knife, make a paste with garlic and a pinch of salt. Put half the garlic paste in a large bowl and add lamb, 1 teaspoon of the salt, cumin, hot sauce, pepper, chile powder, scallion and 1 tablespoon parsley. Mix to combine.

Step 3

Shape lamb mixture into 1 1/2-inch meatballs and place on an oiled rimmed baking sheet. Make sure meatballs are spaced at least 1 inch apart. Transfer baking sheet to oven and broil meatballs for 8 to 10 minutes, or until browned on top and slightly pink on the inside.

Step 4

Meanwhile, combine yogurt, tahini, remaining garlic paste, 1/4 teaspoon salt and the lemon juice to taste.

Step 5

Transfer cooked meatballs to a serving platter or individual plates and serve with tahini sauce and extra hot sauce, if you like. Garnish with the remaining parsley.

PRIVATE NOTES

Leave a Private Note on this recipe and see it here.