



Spicy Pork Meatballs, Spicy Meat Sauce, and Polenta

Courtesy The Meatball Shop

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

INGREDIENTS:

For the Spicy Meat Sauce:

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, finely diced
1 pound ground pork shoulder
2 teaspoons crushed red pepper flakes
kosher salt
2 tablespoons tomato paste
2 26-ounce boxes diced tomatoes

For the Spicy Pork Meatballs:

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 pounds ground pork shoulder
1 tablespoon, plus 1 teaspoon pickled, hot kosher salt
4 hot cherry peppers, minced
¼ cup fresh cherry peppers pickling liquid
4 white bread, minced
3 eggs

For the Polenta:

1 teaspoon coarsely ground kosher salt
2 cups cornmeal
½ cup grated heavy cream
1/3 cup Parmesan
4 tablespoons unsalted butter

METHOD:

For the Spicy Meat Sauce:

In a large pot, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add onion, ground pork, red pepper flakes, and salt and cook, stirring constantly until the meat is thoroughly cooked and onions are soft and beginning to brown, about 15 minutes. Add tomato paste and cook 5 minutes more. Add tomatoes and stir constantly until the sauce begins to boil. Cook 35 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes. Season with salt.

For the Spicy Pork Meatballs:

Preheat oven to 450°F. Drizzle olive oil into a 9-inch x 13-inch baking dish and coat the entire surface. In a large bowl, combine the pork, salt, cherry peppers, pickling liquid, bread, and eggs, mixing by hand until thoroughly incorporated. Roll the mixture into round, golf ball-size meatballs, making sure to pack the meat firmly. Place the balls in the prepared baking dish, being careful to line them up snugly and in even rows vertically and horizontally to form a grid. The meatballs should be touching one another. Roast for 20 minutes, or until the meatballs are firm and cooked through. A meat thermometer inserted into the center of a meatball should read 165°F. Allow the meatballs to cool for 5 minutes in the baking dish before serving.

For the Polenta:

In a medium pot, bring water and salt to a rolling boil in a medium pot over high heat. Whisk in the cornmeal and continue whisking until the water begins to boil again. Lower heat to the lowest setting and continue to cook, stirring every 5 minutes, for 1 hour. Remove from the heat and whisk in the cream, parmesan, and butter. Allow to sit for 10 minutes before serving.

To Assemble and Serve:

Plate a scoop of Polenta and top with Spicy Pork Meatballs and Spicy Meat Sauce.