

Italian Meatballs in Caper-Tomato Sauce

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 lb. plum tomatoes, peeled and chopped
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon nonpareil capers, drained and chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- Kosher salt
- 1/2 cup crust-less bread, torn in 1/2-inch pieces
- 3 tablespoons milk
- 1/2 pound ground pork
- 1/2 pound ground beef
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 2 pitted kalamata olives, minced
- 1 tablespoon freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- 1 tablespoon minced parsley

Directions:

1. In a blender or food processor, puree the tomatoes. In a saucepan, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil. Add the pureed tomatoes and bring to a boil. Simmer over moderate heat, stirring, until the sauce starts to thicken, about 5 minutes. Add the capers and oregano and simmer until the sauce is reduced to 1 1/4 cups, 5 minutes. Season with salt; keep warm.
2. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, cover the bread with the milk. Let stand until the bread has absorbed the milk, about 5 minutes.
3. In a large bowl, combine the ground pork and beef. Add the milk-soaked bread, egg, olives, cheese, parsley and 1 teaspoon of salt. Mix well with your hands and shape the mixture into 1 1/2-inch meatballs.
4. In a large skillet, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil. Add the meatballs and cook over moderately high heat until starting to brown, about 1 minute. Reduce the heat to moderate and cook until browned all over and cooked through, about 8 minutes. Drain the meatballs and transfer to a platter. Pour the hot tomato sauce on top and serve.

Yield: 4 servings