

Lamb Meatballs in Almond Sauce

from Scott Duncan, © Emeril Lagasse, foodnetwork.com

2 slices fresh white bread, torn into small pieces	1/2 C all-purpose flour
3 T Spanish red wine	1/4 C plus 2 T Spanish olive oil
1 1/2 lbs. ground lamb	1 1/2 C diced Spanish onions
1 large egg, lightly beaten	1/2 C dry white wine
2 garlic cloves, chopped	3/4 C chicken stock
1 1/2 T chopped fresh parsley	6 T slivered, blanched almonds
1 t kosher salt	1 large garlic clove
1/2 t freshly ground black pepper	1 T roughly chopped fresh mint leaves
1 t Essence, recipe follows	

Place bread pieces in a small bowl and drizzle with the red wine. Allow bread mixture to stand for 5 minutes.

In a large bowl, combine the lamb, egg, chopped garlic, parsley, and moistened bread. Season with salt, pepper, and Essence. Roll meat into small bite size balls, about 1 tablespoon each. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes or up to overnight.

Place the flour in a small bowl; working in batches, dredge the meatballs in the flour. Shake off any excess flour.

Pour 1/4 cup olive oil into a large saute pan with straight sides and heat the oil until almost smoking over high heat. Add the meatballs, in batches, and fry until well browned, gently rolling to brown all sides, about 4 minutes per batch. Remove the meatballs with a slotted spoon and drain on a paper towel-lined plate. Repeat with remaining batches.

Wipe the pan clean and add the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Place over medium-high heat and, when hot, add the onions. Cook until softened, about 3 minutes. Add the white wine and chicken stock and bring to a boil. Add the reserved meatballs and cover. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook, covered, for 1 hour and 15 minutes.

While the meatballs are cooking, combine the almonds, garlic clove, and mint in a food processor and pulse until a finely ground paste is formed. Set aside.

When the meatballs are tender, uncover and add the almond paste to the broth. Stir to combine and remove from the heat.

To serve, place several meatballs in a small dish and spoon some of the sauce over the tops. Serve with toothpicks or small forks.

Emeril's Creole Seasoning (Essence):

Recipe from "New New Orleans Cooking" by Emeril Lagasse and Jessie Tirsch, Published by William and Morrow, 1993.

2 1/2 T paprika

2 T salt

2 T garlic powder

1 T black pepper

1 T onion powder

1 T cayenne pepper

1 T dried leaf oregano

1 T dried thyme

Combine all ingredients thoroughly and store in an airtight jar or container.

Yield: about 2/3 cup