



Pesto Meatballs & Creamy Orzo with Asparagus

Preparation Time: 10 mins

Cooking Time: 20 mins

Serves: 4

Difficulty: Easy

INGREDIENTS

Meatballs

1lb/455 grams ground chicken or turkey
½ cup panko breadcrumbs
½ cup fresh grated parmesan
1 egg
½ cup basil pesto
¼ tsp sea salt
½ tsp chili flakes
1 tbsp oil

Orzo

2 cups orzo
4 cups chicken broth
¼ cup mascarpone
¼ cup fresh grated parmesan
3 cloves minced garlic
2 tbsp butter

Asparagus

1 bunch asparagus, dice into small rounds
½ fresh squeezed lemon (zest the lemon prior)

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat your oven to 400f/200c, line a baking tray with parchment, and place a baking/cooling rack on top.
2. In a bowl add all the breadcrumbs, pesto, parmesan, egg, salt, and chili flakes. Mix well.
3. Add the ground meat and combine well using your hands, but don't overmix.
4. Roll the meatballs into small balls, a little smaller than the size of a ping pong ball. I like to wear my cooking gloves, but having a small bowl of water to wet your fingers makes it easier.
5. Place balls on baking tray rack, brush with olive oil and bake for 15-18 mins (reach internal temp 165f/73c).
6. In a deeper cooking pan or pot, melt the butter on medium heat, then add the garlic, and cook for 30 seconds.
7. Add the orzo, lightly toasting for 1 minute, then add the 4 cups of chicken broth. Cook for 10 minutes or until al dente, stirring occasionally so it doesn't stick to the bottom.
8. Remove from heat, add mascarpone and ¼ cup parmesan, stirring to combine.
9. In a pan, add oil and heat to medium-high, then add asparagus and a pinch of salt, cook for 2-3 minutes. Turn off and squeeze lemon juice over top.
10. Plate the orzo, top with asparagus and meatballs, add more fresh parmesan and lemon zest.