

Noel's Kitchen Tips

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July 2013 Recipes – All recipes serve 4-6 adults

Week 2

By making the Meatball Master Mix recipe, you always have meatballs ready – for appetizers, casseroles and main dishes. This recipe makes about 108 meatballs (1 Tbsp. size). I store them in freezer bags to use in the month, freezing in quantities of 25-30 per bag and only grab around 12-15 for each recipe.

Meatball Master Mix Recipe

4 lbs. ground turkey
4 eggs, slightly beaten
2 cups dry bread crumbs (*I make my own*)
½ cup finely chopped onion
1 Tablespoon salt
2 Tablespoons cornstarch
¼ teaspoon pepper
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce

*ad in for this recipe: I will occasionally add 1 Tablespoon flax seed or bran. If you have picky eaters, typically young children and you're trying to introduce veggies, you can add ¼ cup carrot puree in place of eggs.

Preheat oven to 400° F. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Blend well. Shape mixture into 1-inch balls. Place meatballs on ungreased baking sheets and bake 10 to 15 minutes, until browned. Remove immediately and drain on paper towels. When cooled, put about 30 meatballs into gallon size Ziploc freezer bags, leaving a ½ inch space at the top for closing. Seal and label the Ziploc bags. Freeze. Use within 3 months.

Baked Mini Meatball with Rigatoni + Vegetables

Boil pasta according to directions. Slice any vegetables of your choice. (*Since its summer time and we have summer squash and zucchini in the garden, they would be a perfect addition to this dish, so I'll slice about a cup of fresh veggies.*) While the pasta is cooking make the béchamel sauce.

Béchamel Sauce

4 ½ cups milk
6 Tablespoons butter
5 Tablespoons flour

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1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon black pepper

To Finish This Dish:

Drain the pasta when still al dente, and combine immediately in bowl with two-thirds of the béchamel, veggies, half the grated cheese, and all the meatballs. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Heavily butter a 9×13 baking dish. Spread the rigatoni and meatball mixture in the pan, leveling it off with a spatula. Pour the milk over the dish, then spread the rest of béchamel on top, and sprinkle with the remaining Parmesan cheese. Place in the uppermost level of the preheated oven. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes until a golden brown crust forms on top. Serve.

Taco Bar Night

Crock Pot Chicken Tacos

In the crock pot, place 3 chicken breasts with 2 Tablespoons Homemade Taco Seasoning (*recipe below and on blog*) and enough water to cover the chicken. Add 1 cup of black beans. (*I always have beans in my freezer ready to throw into the crock pot when needed. Simply follow the fast cooking method on package, drain and freeze in 1 or 2 cup portions. You can also use 1 can of black beans if you have it in your pantry.*) Cook on low for 6 hours. Serve with your favorite taco toppings.

Homemade Taco Seasoning

1/2 teaspoon onion powder
2 Tablespoons chili powder
1/2 teaspoon dried red pepper flakes, crushed
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon salt (*I recommend **Real Salt***)
1 teaspoon Spanish paprika
1/4 teaspoon cornstarch
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1 Tablespoon ground cumin
2 teaspoons pepper

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Combine all ingredients in a small bowl and blend well. Spoon mixture onto a 6-inch square of aluminum foil and fold to make airtight or seal in a snack size zip-loc bag. Label as Taco Seasoning Mix. Store in a cool, dry place and use within 6 months. Makes approximately a little over 1 package (about 4 Tablespoons) of mix. Using the above recipe as a guide you can increase the amounts to make any number of packages.

Broccoli Cheese Soup with Homemade Biscuits

2 cups water
4 potatoes, peeled, rinsed and chopped
1 teaspoon Chicken bouillon
1 broccoli crown, coarsely chopped
1 carrot, diced small
Salt and pepper to taste
1 cup Condensed Cheddar Cheese Soup Substitute (*recipe below*)
1 cup sour cream

In a soup stock pot, place water and potatoes. Sprinkle with chicken bouillon. Spread broccoli and carrots over potatoes. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cover and cook on medium heat for 15 to 20 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Gently mash potatoes. Reduce heat to a simmer and stir in the Cheddar cheese soup and sour cream. (*If needed, you can thin soup with a little milk or half-in-half*). Simmer until soup is heated completely.

Condensed Cheddar Cheese Soup Substitute

This is a great recipe alternative for making your own soup from scratch. There are no unknown additives.

3 Tablespoons butter
3 Tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 cup milk
1 cup Cheddar cheese, shredded
Salt, to taste

Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium-low heat; add flour, and whisk until smooth and bubbly. Remove from heat; gradually add milk, whisking to keep smooth. Return to heat and bring to a gentle boil, whisking constantly until thickened. Add cheese and stir until melted. Add salt.

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Homemade Biscuits from Scratch

- 2 cups flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1 Tablespoon sugar
- 1 Tablespoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 cup vegetable shortening
- 1 cup milk

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, salt, sugar, baking powder and baking soda; Cut in 1/4 shortening until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in milk until a soft dough forms. (It will be sticky.) Turn onto a lightly floured board and knead gently 10 to 12 times or until no longer sticky, re-flouring board as necessary while kneading. Divide dough in half; gently pat or roll each half into an 8-inch circle 1/2-inch thick. Cut out biscuits - pressing straight down - with a 2-inch biscuit cutter. Reform the scraps, working it as little as possible and continue cutting. Place cut biscuits on an ungreased baking sheet with edges barely touching; Brush tops of the biscuits with a little milk. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes. Remove from oven and lightly brush melted butter on top and enjoy with jelly, honey or more butter.

Mexican Fiesta Salad Pizza

Use all your leftovers from taco bar night to make your own Mexican pizza.

Homemade Pizza Crust

- 1 cup warm water
- 2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 Tablespoon sugar
- 4 Tablespoons Italian seasoning
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 1/4 teaspoons active dry yeast
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Put all ingredients in your mixer and mix until a soft dough ball forms. If your dough is too sticky add a bit more flour. Put your mixer on level 2 and let your dough knead for 5 minutes. While the mixer is doing its magic I get out my toppings and sauce. (Chopping and dicing the ingredients ahead of time and storing in the fridge ready to go can save you time.) Roll your dough out onto your pizza pan. I use a

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round pizza pan with holes on the bottom. Spread sauce on top of dough. Add toppings like Diced tomatoes, shredded lettuce, sour cream, ketchup (for those that don't like hot sauce), shredded cheese and Pico de Gallo. Have fun with it! Layer on your toppings and then bake for 20-25 minutes. Brush crust with olive oil and let cool for a few minutes before cutting.

** You can use whole wheat flour, all-purpose flour, or a combination of both.*

*** I make my own re-fried beans by cooking pinto beans in the crock pot with 2 Tbsp taco seasoning and cooking for 8 hours the day before I need them. I then slightly mash the beans once cooked. Occasionally, I'll spice them up by adding 1 small can of diced green chilies.*

Italian Meatball Sub Sandwiches + Vegetables

1 teaspoon vegetable or canola oil

1 (16-ounce bag) frozen meatballs (*use Master Meatball Mix Recipe*)

1 batch of spaghetti sauce (*recipe in Week 1 under Family Spaghetti Night*)

6-8 hoagie rolls

1 cup Mozzarella cheese, shredded

In a medium skillet, heat oil over medium heat until hot. Add meatballs and cook 3-4 minutes, stirring frequently, until the meatballs are heated through. Add the pasta sauce and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until meatballs and sauce are heated thoroughly. Spoon the meatball and sauce mixture into each hoagie bun. Sprinkle each hoagie with cheese. Serve with steamed veggies of your choice.

Pumpkin Pancakes

1 cup flour

1 Tablespoon sugar

1 ½ teaspoons baking powder

¼ teaspoon cinnamon

1 cup pumpkin puree

¼ teaspoon vanilla extract

2 eggs

1 Tablespoon melted butter/margarine

Mix ingredients all together. Add ¼ cup batter at a time on hot griddle or skillet. This recipe makes approximately 8 pancakes. Serve with homemade maple syrup (*recipe in week 1 under Breakfast Night*)