

RV GODDESS: Spaghetti & Meatballs

What could be better than a platter of spaghetti, topped with red sauce and savory beef meatballs? What if the dish was simple to prepare and there was no messy frying step, making a family favorite RV-friendly? Now we're talking. If you don't have panko, use plain dry breadcrumbs. This recipe makes about 18 meatballs. Served with spaghetti and red sauce, it will feed 6 people generously.

- 1 egg
- 1/2 teaspoon Kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano (or basil, or Italian seasoning)
- 1/4 cup very finely minced yellow onion
- 1 or 2 cloves very finely minced garlic
- 2 Tablespoons finely minced fresh Italian parsley
- 1 pound (5-10% fat) ground beef
- 1/2 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup panko (Japanese-style bread crumbs)

- Two 24 ounce jars of your favorite red pasta sauce (or home-made)
- One pound spaghetti, cooked according to package directions
- Additional parmesan cheese and/or parsley or basil, as garnish

Line a dinner plate with parchment or waxed paper. In a medium bowl, add the egg, salt, pepper, and oregano. Whisk to combine. Add the onion, garlic, and parsley. Stir to mix. Add the ground beef, parmesan cheese, and breadcrumbs and knead together (clean hands work best) until just combined. Do not over-mix. Form the meat mixture into golf ball-sized balls and place on lined plate. Let rest, covered and refrigerated, for at least two hours before cooking.

Heat the red sauce in a Dutch oven or similar pot with a tight-fitting lid. When the sauce begins to boil, carefully drop the meatballs, one at a time, into the sauce. Carefully shake the pan a bit, or gently use a spoon to cover each meatball in a little sauce. **DO NOT STIR.** Cover, and gently simmer the meatballs for 25 minutes, then remove from heat and let rest for five minutes. Serve over hot spaghetti pasta and garnish with additional grated parmesan cheese or chopped parsley or basil leaves, if desired. Serves 6 (or more).

NOTE: I usually use half the meatballs, one jar of pasta sauce and less pasta - which will serve 3-4 very well. The other half of the meat balls are kept frozen - ready for an easy (pantry-friendly) dinner another night. No need to thaw, just increase cooking time by five minutes or so. Another tip: rinse the pasta sauce jar with a large glug of red or white wine. Replace the lid, give it a good shake, and pour it into the pot.