

Spinach Garlic Meatballs Stuffed with Mozzarella: Cheesy & Delicious

Spinach Garlic Meatballs Stuffed With Mozzarella



OVEN
350°F

TIME
3-4 min

TEMP
165°F

PRINT
Recipe Card

INGREDIENTS

8 ounces fresh baby spinach
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped (for spinach)
1-2 tablespoons olive oil (for spinach)
1 pound ground beef (80/20 recommended)
1 pound ground pork
2 ... cups breadcrumbs (plain or Panko)
3 (or 4 if small) eggs
Splash of milk (about 2-3 tablespoons)
4 cloves garlic, finely chopped (for meatballs)
1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
Salt and pepper to taste
Mozzarella cheese, cut into small (1/2-inch) cubes (about 4-6 oz)
2 tablespoons olive oil (for pan-frying meatballs)
1 jar Rao's marinara sauce (or your favorite high-quality marinara)

Swaps and Notes:

Ground Beef & Pork: The combination of ground beef and pork provides excellent flavor and moisture for tender meatballs. You can use all beef, all pork, or ground turkey for a leaner option (though turkey may need a bit more fat or moisture).

Fresh Baby Spinach: Adds flavor, color, and nutrition. Frozen spinach (thawed and very well squeezed dry) can be used.

Garlic: Freshly chopped garlic is essential for robust flavor in both the spinach and the

meatballs.

Breadcrumbs: Plain breadcrumbs or Panko (for a lighter texture) work well as a binder.

Eggs & Milk: Help bind the meatballs and keep them moist. Adjust milk slightly based on the moisture content of your meat.

Parmesan Cheese: Freshly grated Parmesan adds a salty, umami depth to the meatballs.

Mozzarella Cheese Cubes: Cutting mozzarella into small cubes ensures a melty, gooey center. Shredded mozzarella can be used, but cubes hold better inside.

Olive Oil (for frying): For pan-frying the meatballs to create a golden crust.

Rao's Marinara Sauce: A high-quality jarred marinara sauce makes this dish easy and delicious. Use your favorite brand!

DIRECTIONS

1. Let's cook these delicious : Spinach Garlic Meatballs Stuffed With Mozzarella!
2. SautØ Spinach & Garlic: Heat 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the 8 ounces of fresh baby spinach and toss until coated. Let it wilt for a few minutes until completely soft. Add the 3 cloves of finely chopped garlic to the skillet with the spinach and sautØ for another minute or two, stirring, until the garlic smells fragrant. Remove the spinach from the skillet, chop it into very small pieces (squeeze out any excess liquid if present), and set aside in a bowl to cool completely.
3. Preheat : Oven: Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C).
4. Mix : Meatball Mixture: In a large mixing bowl, combine the 1 pound ground beef, 1 pound ground pork, 2 ... cups breadcrumbs, 3 large eggs (or 4 if small), a splash of milk (about 2-3 tablespoons), 4 cloves finely chopped garlic (for meatballs), 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese, salt, and pepper to taste. Add the cooled, chopped spinach/garlic mixture to the bowl. Mix everything together with your hands until well combined but be careful not to overmix, as this can make the meatballs tough.
5. Stuff & : Roll Meatballs: Take a portion of the meat mixture (about 2 tablespoons for a medium-sized meatball). Press a small cube of mozzarella cheese into the center of each meatball. Carefully roll the meat mixture around the cheese cube to completely encase the cheese, forming an evenly sized meatball. Repeat with the remaining meat mixture and mozzarella cubes.

6. **Pan-: Fry Meatballs:** Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large oven-safe skillet (a cast iron skillet is ideal for even heat and for transferring directly to the oven) over medium-high heat. Add the formed meatballs in a single layer, working in batches if necessary to avoid overcrowding. Pan-fry the meatballs until they are beautifully golden brown and have formed a flavorful crust on all sides (about 3-4 minutes total). They do not need to be cooked through at this point.
7. **Add : Marinara & Bake:** Once all the meatballs are browned, add them back into the skillet if cooking in batches. Add dollops of 1 jar of Rao's marinara sauce (or your favorite marinara) to the bottom of the skillet, creating a sauce bed for the meatballs to simmer in. Gently nestle the meatballs into the sauce.
8. **Bake:** Cover the skillet tightly with aluminum foil (or an oven-safe lid if your skillet has one). Transfer the skillet to the preheated oven. Bake for about 25 minutes, or until the meatballs are cooked through and reach an internal temperature of 165°F (74°C) when measured with a meat thermometer in the center of a meatball (avoiding the cheese).
9. **Serve:** Remove the skillet from the oven. Let it rest for a few minutes before serving. Serve the Spinach Garlic Meatballs Stuffed With Mozzarella generously over your preferred pasta (like spaghetti or tortellini), garnished with extra grated Parmesan cheese and fresh herbs (like basil or parsley) if desired.

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Fresh Baby Spinach: Adds flavor, color, and nutrition.

Frozen spinach (thawed and very well squeezed dry) can be used.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Sautø Spinach & Garlic First: This step wilts the spinach and infuses it with garlic flavor, making it easier to mix into the meat.

Cool Spinach Mixture: Ensure the spinach mixture is cooled before adding to the raw meat to avoid premature cooking of the meat/eggs.

Don't Overmix Meatball Mixture: Mix just until combined to keep the meatballs tender.

Overmixing results in tough meatballs.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/spinach-garlic-meatballs-stuffed-with-mozzarella-cheesy-delicious/>