

Cheese-Stuffed Chicken Parmesan Meatballs

Meatballs:

1 pound ground chicken
1/3 cup panko bread crumbs (Japanese bread crumbs)
3 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese, plus more for serving if desired
1 large egg
1 teaspoon onion powder
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1/2 teaspoon dried basil
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
2 mozzarella cheese sticks, cut into 6 pieces each, or 2 ounces mozzarella cheese, cut into 6 equal pieces
2 cups marinara sauce OR recipe below
12 ounces pasta of choice, cooked according to the package directions

Marinara sauce:

2 cups tomato sauce (from a carton or can)
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon dried basil
1/2 teaspoon onion powder
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
Salt and ground black pepper to taste

To make the sauce, combine all the ingredients in a medium saucepan and set the pan over medium heat. Bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or foil. To make the meatballs, in a large bowl, combine the chicken, bread crumbs, parmesan cheese, egg, onion powder, oregano, basil, garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Mix well and shape the mixture into 12 meatballs. Press one piece of cheese into the center of each meatball and cover the cheese with the chicken mixture, making sure no cheese is sticking out.

Transfer the meatballs to the prepared pan and roast for 20 minutes, until the meatballs are golden brown and cooked through.

Meanwhile, heat the marinara sauce or make my homemade version. Cook the pasta according to the package directions.

Arrange the pasta in shallow bowls and top with the sauce and meatballs. If desired, serve with additional parmesan cheese on the side.

Serves 4