

Meatball Stuffed Peppers by Nick Ritchie, Executive Chef, Signature Kitchen Suite

Servings: 4-6

Ingredients:

4-6 large red or yellow bell peppers, or a mix of both
1 pound ground Sirloin
1 large egg 3 Tbsp. grated parmesan cheese
3 Tbsp. chopped Italian parsley
1 Tbsp chopped oregano (can substitute 1 teaspoon dry oregano, crumbled)
2 Tbsp chopped basil
1 cup yellow onion, finely diced
1 1/8 cups fine, dried bread crumbs
2+ cups water
2 cups tomato sauce (recipe follows for "Quick" Tomato Sauce, or prepared/store-bought sauce can be substituted)
t.t Tbsp salt
t.t tsp. ground black pepper

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Bring a large pot of water to a boil and add salt. Cut off the lids from the peppers and reserve them. Remove the seeds, and any white ribs, then cut a thin slice from the bottom of each pepper so they will stand up. Add the peppers and lids to the pot of boiling water and cook until softened, about 8 minutes. Drain and allow to cool.
2. In a large bowl, mix the meat, egg, two tablespoons of cheese, two tablespoons of parsley, oregano, basil, onion, one cup of breadcrumbs, salt, pepper, and one cup of water. Knead the water into the meat mixture with your hands. Add another ½ C of water and continue to knead. As you knead, the breadcrumbs will soften. Add the remaining ½ C water and knead again. By now, the mixture should feel smooth and have a very soft texture. If you would like to taste your mix for seasoning, make a very small patty from the meat mixture, cook it in a sauté pan, and taste for the desired flavor before you stuff peppers.
3. Season the insides of the peppers with salt and pepper. Spoon a little tomato sauce into the bottom of each pepper and divide the meat mixture among them. Place upright in an oven-safe baking dish and pour the remaining tomato sauce over and around the peppers. Top each pepper with its' pepper lid. Cover the peppers first with parchment paper, then cover the entire dish tightly with foil. Bake until the peppers are soft and the filling has cooked all the way through, approximately 60 minutes.
4. While the peppers are cooking, make the topping. In a small bowl, mix together the remaining cheese, parsley, and breadcrumbs. Uncover the baking dish, remove the pepper lids and dust each pepper with the topping. Turn the oven to broil and place the peppers under the broiler until just browned, approx. one minute. Replace the lids and serve hot or at room temperature.