

Cheesy Meatball Pasta Bake

This Cheesy Meatball Pasta Bake Recipe is one your family is going to absolutely LOVE. So easy to make and even more delicious to eat!

Prep Time
15 mins

Cook Time
45 mins

Total Time
1 hr 5 mins

Course: Dinner, Main Course Cuisine: American, Italian
Servings: 5 - 6 Author: [Chris Collins](#)



★★★★★
5 from 7 votes

Equipment

- 9" x 13" Baking Dish (or similar size)
- Large Pot (for boiling pasta)
- Large Deep Pan
- Large Mixing Bowl (for meatballs)
- Wooden Spoon
- Baking Tray (for meatballs - optional)
- Tongs
- Box Grater
- Sharp Knife & Chopping Board

Ingredients

Meatballs

- 9oz / 250g **Ground Beef** (20%+ fat)
- 9oz / 250g **Ground Pork** (20%+ fat)
- 2 thin slices of **White Bread**, cubed
- 1/4 cup / 60ml **Milk**
- 1/4 cup **Fresh Parsley**, finely diced
- 1/2 cup / 40g **Parmesan**, finely grated
- 1 medium **White Onion**, grated
- 2 cloves of **Garlic**, grated/minced
- 1 tsp **Worcestershire Sauce**
- 1/2 tsp **Dried Oregano**
- 1 **Egg**
- 3/4 tsp **Salt**
- 1/4 tsp **Black Pepper**

Meatball Sauce

- 24oz / 700g **Tomato Passata** (pureed tomatoes/tomato puree in the US)
- 2x 14oz/400g cans of **Chopped Tomatoes**
- 8 **Sun Dried Tomatoes**, finely diced
- 1 medium **Onion**, finely diced
- 2 cloves of **Garlic**, finely diced
- 1/4 cup **Fresh Parsley**, finely diced (plus extra to garnish)
- 1/4 cup **Fresh Basil**, finely diced
- **Salt & Black Pepper**, to taste

Plus:

- 10.5oz / 300g **Rigatoni** (or other short cut pasta)
- 1.5 cups / 150g **Cheddar**, grated (or cheese of choice)
- **Olive Oil**, for frying

Instructions

1. In a mixing bowl, soak 2 slices of cubed bread in 1/4 cup/60ml milk, 1 medium grated onion, 2 cloves grated/minced garlic, 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce and mash with a fork. Stir in 1/4 cup diced parsley, 1/2 cup/40g parmesan, 1/2 tsp oregano, 1 egg, 3/4 tsp salt and 1/4 tsp black pepper. Gently work in your pork and beef, then form your meatballs. Make sure you don't overwork the meat.
2. **GRILL/BROIL:** lightly spray with oil then pop under grill for 10-15mins or until golden brown. Flip once half way and shake about to evenly cook. Make sure you get a nice colour on them, they don't need to be cooked right through, they will finish poaching in the sauce. **OR FRY:** heat a drizzle of oil over medium-high heat and fry for 4-5mins or until golden, shaking frequently. Again, just focus on getting colour and don't worry about being cooked right through.
3. Fry 1 medium diced onion, 2 cloves minced garlic & 8 diced sun-dried tomatoes until soft. Pour in 24oz/700g passata & 2x 14oz/400g cans of chopped tomatoes. Add 1/4 cup parsley, basil & seasoning to taste, then stir your meatballs. Simmer for 15-20mins, or until the sauce begins to thicken.
4. Meanwhile, cook 10.5oz/300g pasta in salted boiling water until JUST al dente. You want it still a bit hard otherwise it'll go soft and mushy when baked. Combine with pasta in a baking dish, top with cheese and bake at 200C/390F for 15-20mins, or until golden and gooey. Serve with fresh parsley!

Notes

a) Perfect Meatballs - Check out my guide to the [best homemade meatballs](#) for a more in depth review on how to get soft and juicy meatballs.

b) Best way to form meatballs - Grab a measuring tbsp and scoop out all the filling (just so they all turn out being equal size), wet your hands then roll them in to balls. This is a much more efficient way in comparison to rolling them out one by one.

c) Can I make the whole pasta bake in advance? - If you want to make the whole thing in advance you can, I just recommend allowing everything to cool separately (sauce and pasta) before combining or it'll start to cook the pasta. Also more important than ever to slightly undercook the pasta. Once cool, combine, cover with cling film and pop in the fridge. Add another 5-10mins onto cooking time if cooking straight from fridge.

d) Can I use store bought meatballs? - Absolutely! I do recommend grabbing some good quality meatballs, as they are the star of the show.

e) Al dente pasta - Make sure it's still a little hard after boiling, it'll finish cooking in the sauce. If it's properly cooked beforehand, it'll be too sloppy when it comes out the oven.

f) Garlic Bread - be sure to serve this with my homemade [Roasted Garlic Bread](#)!

g) Calories - based on sharing between 5 people, with 1 tbsp olive oil for frying, 15% pork and beef, whole milk and 1.5 cups cheddar.

Nutrition

Calories: 689kcal | Carbohydrates: 39.9g | Protein: 46.4g | Fat: 39.41g | Saturated Fat: 15.939g | Polyunsaturated Fat: 3.485g | Monounsaturated Fat: 15.061g | Trans Fat: 0.866g | Cholesterol: 282mg | Sodium: 1143mg | Potassium: 1310mg | Fiber: 8.4g | Sugar: 7.32g | Vitamin A: 4000IU | Vitamin C: 54.5mg | Calcium: 470mg | Iron: 5.4mg