

MINT AND PARSLEY MEATBALLS from Canal House Cooking/La Dolce Vita

(Often served with broccoli rabe sautéed with garlic and red pepper flakes)

- **1 pound ground pork**
- **1 pound ground veal**
- **¼ pound prosciutto, finely chopped**
- **1 cup fresh whole milk ricotta (in the book or David Lebovitz' version)**
- **1 cup grated pecorino***
- **2 eggs**
- **¼ cup packed finely chopped fresh mint leaves**
- **¼ cup packed finely chopped fresh parsley leaves**
- **½ whole nutmeg, grated**
- **Pepper**
- **¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- **½ cup white wine**
- **¾ cup heavy cream**
- **optional salt**

1. Mix together the pork, veal, prosciutto, ricotta, pecorino, eggs, mint, parsley, nutmeg, and pepper in a large mixing bowl.

2. Use a large soup spoon and scoop up about 2 ounces of the meat into your hand and roll into a ball.

3. Make all the meatballs the same size so they will cook evenly. As you make them, arrange them in a single layer on a baking sheet. You can do this a few hours ahead, cover with plastic, and refrigerate until you are ready to cook them.

4. Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Brown the meatballs in batches, about 15 minutes per batch, using two forks to delicately turn them over so that they brown on all sides. Add more oil if needed. Transfer cooked meatballs to a platter and cover with foil to keep warm.

5. Increase the heat to high and deglaze the skillet with the wine, stirring with a wooden spoon to loosen any browned bits stuck to the bottom of the skillet. Add the cream, if using, and cook, stirring, until the sauce thickens.

*Pecorino Romano is, most likely, the pecorino (hard, often gratable sheep's cheese) available in most American grocery stores. Milder and less expensive than Parmesan, it's a happy addition to pasta or salads.

Cook's Note: I made one meatball first and cooked it to test the seasoning; I had gone easy on the black pepper and had not added any salt at all. My thought was to maintain the freshness/lightness of the meatball so that the herbs weren't overwhelmed. On tasting, I did add a bit more pepper and about 1/2 tsp kosher salt. The rest of the batch was perfect. You could do anything you typically do with meatballs with these, but I do think they're special and complete all on their own. I served them with broccolini sautéed in olive oil with crushed red peppers and slices of garlic thrown in the last 2-3 minutes. We started with a little very simple green salad.