

GOURMET gone WILD

Tuscan Venison Meatballs



Ingredients:

2 lbs. ground venison
10-16 balls of fresh mozzarella ciliegine
¼ cup diced red onion
½ cup chopped artichoke hearts
½ cup rehydrated and chopped sun-dried tomatoes
2 tablespoons fresh, chopped garlic
½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
1 cup Panko breadcrumbs
3 tablespoons red wine
3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
2 fresh, lightly beaten eggs
1 cup olive oil
½ tablespoon kosher salt
1 tablespoon blended ground pepper
4-8 cups Marinara sauce

Preparation:

Add ground venison to the bowl of a tabletop mixer. Using the paddle attachment, stir meat on medium speed for 40 seconds. Turn off mixer and add red onion, artichoke, sun-dried tomatoes, garlic and Parmesan cheese. Mix on medium-high until meat structure begins to pink and soften. Turn mixer to low and blend in eggs, red wine, and Worcestershire sauce. Once incorporated, return mixer to medium-high for 30 seconds. Turn off mixer and add Panko breadcrumbs, salt and pepper. Gently move mixer back onto medium speed. SLOWLY drizzle

olive oil into venison mixture until protein structure fully elongates, pinks and softens, and all oil is absorbed.

Take 3-4 ounces of venison mixture and roll into a meatball and flatten into roughly ¼-inch thick disk. Place one mozzarella ciliegine onto center of disk and roll venison mixture up and around, fully wrapping the cheese. Place onto plate and repeat for remaining mixture. Meatballs can be cooked immediately or wrapped with plastic and stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator or freezer.

Cooking:

Preheat oven to 350°.

Warm olive oil in a deep nonstick sauté pan and add meatballs to the warm pan, browning all sides. Once browned, cover meatballs with 4-8 cups of your favorite room temperature Marinara sauce. Place in oven and bake until both meatball and marinara reach 155°. Serve over warm spaghetti or with toasted focaccia bread.