



KINDERHOOK FARM MEATBALLS

2 pounds Kinderhook Farm grass-fed ground beef
1/2 cup panko (Japanese bread crumbs)
1/2 cup milk
1 tablespoon butter
1/2 cup minced sweet onion
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
1/2 cup minced fresh parsley leaves
1 egg, from Kinderhook Farm laying hens
1/8 teaspoon allspice

Soak the bread crumbs in the milk until the milk is absorbed, about 5 minutes. Melt the butter in a small skillet over medium heat. Cook the onion in it, stirring, until it is softened, 4 to 5 minutes. Remove from the heat.

Gently mix together the bread crumbs, onion, meat, salt, pepper, parsley, egg, and allspice and gently shape into meatballs about one inch in diameter. Try not to squeeze the beef when you shape the meatballs, just form the meat mixture into a ball in your hand. The egg, milk and bread crumbs will add enough moisture to hold the meatball in it's shape as it roasts. Roast them in a 375 degree oven until they are nicely browned, twenty or thirty minutes.

Or, melt additional butter in a large, deep skillet over medium heat. Add the meatballs (you may have to do this in batches; if so, it may be easier to use the oven); and cook, shaking gently every couple of minutes. Adjust the heat so that the meatballs brown but the fat does not burn, and cook until they are brown all over. Cook until an instant-read thermometer inserted in to the center of a meatball reads 160 degrees.

The key to this recipe is the flavor of the grass-fed beef and my hens will want to take credit too, for their amazing pasture eggs. The light seasoning added doesn't mask the delicate flavor of the beef. Two pounds of ground beef will make approximately 50 small meatballs.

In Mark Bittman's recipe "Basic Meatballs" there is a lovely sauce made with stock and cream to pour over the meatballs before serving which follows:

1 tablespoon flour
1 cup chicken, beef, or vegetable stock, or water
1 cup half-and-half or cream (optional)
Minced fresh parsley leaves for garnish

Remove the meatballs to a platter and keep warm while you prepare the sauce: Stir the flour into the fat (remembering that the fat from grass-fed beef is high in Omega-3's), and cook, stirring, for about a minute. Over medium-high heat, add the stock or water and cook, stirring, until the liquid is reduced by about half. (If you choose not to use the cream, pour this sauce over the meatballs and serve.)

Stir in the cream, reduce the heat to medium-low, and cook, stirring, for about 2 minutes, until the sauce is smooth, golden brown, and slightly thickened. Pour over the meatballs, garnish, and serve

adapted from Basic Meatballs in *How to Cook Everything* by Mark Bittman