

Meatballs in Tomato Sauce with Cinnamon & Cumin by Rick Stein

1 hour

Serves 4

For the meatballs

500g minced beef

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped or grated

1 egg, beaten

½ tsp ground cumin

½ tsp ground oregano

2 slices stale white bread (about 100g), soaked in red wine and squeezed dry

½ tsp salt

12 turn black peppermill

3tbsp olive oil

For the tomato sauce

1 onion, finely chopped

1 clove garlic, finely chopped

3 tbsp olive oil

5cm cinnamon stick

1 tsp sugar

150ml red wine

1 tbsp tomato paste

500ml passata

½ tsp salt

12 turns black peppermill

Method

Mix together all the ingredients for the meatballs except the olive oil and, with wet hands, shape into 20 to 24 rugby-ball shapes. Heat the oil in a frying pan over high heat and fry the meatballs until golden on all sides, or grill on a griddle pan if you like grill lines on the patties.

Make the tomato sauce by sweating the onion and garlic in the olive oil with the cinnamon stick, cumin and sugar until soft, about 10 minutes over medium heat. Add the red wine and bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to medium again. Add the tomato paste and passata, season with the salt and pepper and cook until slightly thickened, about 20 minutes.

Add the fried meatballs and simmer for 20 to 30 minutes with a lid on the pan until cooked through, adding a little water if the sauce is too thick. Serve with spaghetti.