



# Moroccan Meatballs



One of my favorite foods is meatballs. Everybody makes them slightly different, and some I favor over others. From the Mediterranean Diet Cookbook by Gilberto Bender comes a meatball recipe that is distinctly different from any I've tasted, and within one meal rose to the top of my favorites. If you would like to try something different, try this! As always, Lorraine added a few extras, all positive.

## Moroccan Meatballs

1/4 cup finely chopped onion  
1/4 cup raisins, coarsely chopped  
1 teaspoon ground cumin  
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon smoked paprika  
1 teaspoon minced garlic \*  
1/4 teaspoon salt \*  
1/4 teaspoon black pepper \*  
1/2 tablespoon finely chopped fresh mint \*  
1 large egg  
1/3 cup panko bread crumbs  
1 pound (454 g) ground beef (or ground lamb)  
\* These ingredients were added to the original recipe

1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil

1 (28-ounce/ 794-g) can low sodium or no-salt-added crushed tomatoes

Chopped fresh mint, feta cheese, and/or fresh orange or lemon wedges for serving

1. In a large bowl, combine the onion, raisins, cumin, cinnamon, smoked paprika and egg (and the additional ingredients garlic, salt, pepper, mint). Add the ground beef and bread crumbs and mix gently with your hands. Divide the mixture into 20 even portions, then roll each portion into a ball.

2. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, heat the oil. Add the meatballs and cook for 8 minutes, rolling around every minute or so with tongs or a fork to brown them on most sides. (They won't be cooked through.) Transfer the

meatballs to a paper towel-lined plate. Drain the fat out of the pan.

3. Return the meatballs to the pan, and pour the tomatoes over the meatballs. Cover and cook on medium-high heat until the sauce begins to bubble. Lower the heat to medium, cover partially, and cook for 7 to 8 more minutes, until the meatballs are cooked through.

Garnish with fresh mint, feta cheese, and/or a squeeze of citrus (used both lemon and lime) if desired, and serve.

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