

## **Spiced Lamb Meatballs with Tomato and Yogurt over Basmati Rice**

Serves 4

### ***Meatballs***

1 lb. ground lamb  
1/2 small onion, grated or finely minced  
1 clove garlic, finely minced or pressed  
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley  
1 egg, lightly beaten  
3/4 tsp. ground allspice  
1/8 tsp. cinnamon  
1 tsp. salt  
fresh ground pepper  
olive oil for pan frying

### ***Tomato sauce***

2 tsp. olive oil  
1/4 cup diced onion  
1 (15 oz.) can crushed tomatoes  
heaping 3/4 tsp. oregano

### ***Yogurt sauce***

1 clove garlic, minced  
2/3 cup plain Greek yogurt

### ***Rice***

1 Tbsp. butter  
1/4 cup diced onion  
1 clove garlic, minced  
1 cup brown basmati rice  
2 cups chicken broth  
2 Tbsp. toasted pine nuts

Mix all the ingredients together for the meatballs except the olive oil (being careful not to overmix, which could result in a tough meatball) and form into meatballs. At this point, I like to refrigerate the mixture for 30 minutes or so (or longer, if you want) to marry the flavors and firm up the meatballs.

To make the rice, heat the butter in a medium saucepan with lid over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic, cooking until tender. Stir in the rice and cook for a few minutes to toast up the grains and coat them with the butter. Add the chicken broth and bring to a boil. Cover with a tight-fitting lid, reduce the heat to low, and cook for about 40 minutes. No peeking! Once done, take off the heat and let sit for a few minutes before fluffing with a fork and stirring in the toasted pine nuts.

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To make the tomato sauce, heat the olive oil in a small saucepan and then add the onions, cooking until tender. Stir in the crushed tomatoes, oregano, and salt and pepper to taste. Reduce to a simmer and allow the mixture to cook as you are making the rest of the meal.

Add olive oil to a skillet over medium-high heat (I like using a nonstick skillet for this). In batches, fry the meatballs until cooked through. Place on a paper-towel lined plate and keep warm until all the meatballs are cooked.

Once all meatballs are cooked, drain or wipe out the pan slightly (leave a little fat in there, but not as much as the oil and lamb have made). Turn the heat off, and then add the garlic clove (the residual heat will be more than enough to make it fragrant). Stir in the yogurt until just warmed through and season to taste with salt and pepper.

To plate: Top the rice with the meatballs and a few spoonfuls each of the tomato and yogurt mixture.