



Vegetarian meatballs



Omega-3 vegetarian meatballs

Meatballs or meatballs with sauce? Forget the great classics because today we have some delicious vegetarian meatballs in mind: meatballs with spinach and goat ricotta cheese.

Using of the most successful combinations in the kitchen, spinach and ricotta cheese, we created a dish that is lipidomically balanced and also suitable for vegetarians thanks to its ALA (alpha linolenic acid) content from a vegetable source.

Let's find out more about the properties and benefits of the valuable ingredients we will use!

Spinach: vegetable with omega-3 content

Spinach contain several, beneficial macro- and. Spinach have antioxidant and anti-cancer action: thanks to **vitamins A and C, carotenoids and magnesium**. They also contain **Vitamin K**, essential for blood clotting, calcium, with known benefits for bones, and **folic acid**, an element that regulates cell function, tissue growth and prevents physical and mental fatigue.

It is the vegetable with the highest **omega-3** content – 360 g of alpha linolenic acid (ALA) per 100 g of spinach – with known anti-inflammatory properties.

Finally, due to the presence of **soluble fibers**, spinach promote intestinal regularity, reduce the risk of colon cancer and controls the absorption of cholesterol and sugars.

Goat ricotta

Goat's milk ricotta is considered a **particularly digestible and tolerated food**, characterized by high nutritional value and low-fat content, and is therefore recommended for those suffering from hypercholesterolemia. Goat's milk contains **short-chain fatty acids**, which inhibit the accumulation of cholesterol and instead promote its mobilization from deposits. It is also rich in isomers of **conjugated linoleic acid**, CLA, which prevent cancer, cardiovascular disease, atherosclerosis and even diabetes.

It is recommended as a food for both children and those with gastric problems.

Vitamins and minerals found in goat ricotta include: vitamin A, B vitamins, vitamin C, vitamin E, calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, zinc, iodine, selenium, potassium, iron, and sodium. The vitamins and minerals contained facilitate the proper functioning of metabolism and are rich in antioxidant properties.

Parmesan

Parmesan cheese possesses a high energy-nutritional concentration.

Parmigiano Reggiano has several nutritional characteristics; first of all, it contains **little lactose**, that makes it usually suitable for people with lactose intolerance. In addition, it provides a significant concentration of **proteins with high biological value** which is a very interesting aspect for athletes, children, vegetarians and those suffering from intestinal malabsorption. Finally, Parmesan cheese is rich in riboflavin (vit. B2), retinol (vit. A) and vitamin D.

Nutri-lipidomic recipe

VEGETARIAN MEATBALLS WITH SPINACH, GOAT RICOTTA AND PARMESAN

Given the properties of the ingredients used in today's recipe, ricotta and spinach meatballs are original and tasty, healthy and light. Everybody will like them, children and adults, vegetarians and omnivores! It takes a little to prepare them, even less to taste them! Therefore, we recommend that you really prepare ricotta and spinach meatballs in good quantity: one leads to another!

INGREDIENTS FOR ABOUT 24 MEATBALLS

- Spinach already cleaned 250 g
- Goat ricotta cheese 250 g
- Parmesan cheese DOP (to grate) 50 g
- Breadcrumbs 40 g
- Extra-virgin olive oil 20 g
- Garlic 1 clove
- Fine salt as needed
- Black pepper as needed

BREADING

- 1 Egg
- Breadcrumbs
- Fine salt as needed
- Black pepper as needed



Preparation

The following steps should be followed to prepare the spinach and ricotta cheese balls.

Heat the oil along with a whole clove of garlic, plunge in the previously washed spinach and let it sizzle over high heat, cooking for 4-5 minutes, stirring often until

it wilts completely. Get rid of the garlic and then drain the spinach in a colander, mash lightly with a spatula so as to lose excess water and allow to cool.

Once cold, coarsely chop with a knife. Now pour the ricotta into a bowl (if necessary, remove excess water) and stir with a spoon. Add the spinach and grated cheese, adjust with salt and pepper and mix. To give the meatballs more texture, add breadcrumbs and continue mixing. As soon as the mixture is ready, the meatballs can be formed. Then take some of the dough, about 20 grams, and shape them with your hands. This will yield about 24-26 small meatballs. Gently pass the formed meatballs into a small bowl with beaten egg along with salt and pepper, and then into another small bowl with breadcrumbs.

Continue in this way until all the mixture is used. Arrange the meatballs on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and bake the spinach and ricotta meatballs in a preheated oven, static mode, at 200° for about 20 minutes.

Tips: :

- Choose the tender leaves of spinach.
- To maintain the organoleptic properties, cook them freshly blanched by steaming.
- Make sure the spinach is well squeezed out otherwise the mixture will remain very moist.
- Buy only fresh, well-dried ricotta. If necessary, let it drain in a sieve for a couple of hours.
- However, if you notice that the dough is indeed too soft you can add more grated parmesan cheese, such

as Pecorino or Parmigiano Reggiano DOP, to dry the dough and shape it better.

Another omega-3 recipe: > www.lipinutragen.it/en/tuna-salmon-cubes/

Further reading:

Omega-3 supplements: > www.lipinutragen.it/en/fatty-acids-supplementation/

Article by the Lipinutragen Editorial Group

Recipe created by Andreea Popa, Data Entry and Customer Care Account, a cooking lover.

The dietary advice in the article is not intended as a substitute for a personalized diet plan and is to be adapted to specific cases.

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