

# Ricotta Lamb Meatballs with Gochujang Marinara

*Yields 20 Ping Pong Size Meatballs; 30 Bite Size Meatballs:*

## Ingredients

Gochujang Marinara:

2 tablespoons olive oil  
2 garlic cloves, peeled and smashed  
1/4 cup gochujang (Korean red pepper paste)  
1 28 ounce can of whole tomatoes, blended  
1 14 ounce jar of passata (Italian tomato purée)  
pinch of sugar, to taste  
kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Ricotta Lamb Meatballs:

1 1/4 pound ground lamb  
1/2 cup ricotta  
1/4 cup panko crumbs  
1 egg, lightly beaten  
1/4 cup grated red onion  
1 large garlic clove, pressed  
2 tablespoons cilantro, minced  
2 tablespoons mint, minced, plus julienned mint for garnish  
1 teaspoon cumin  
1 teaspoon coriander  
2 teaspoons paprika  
kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

## Preparation

In a large sauté pan over medium heat, heat olive oil.

Add smashed garlic cloves and cook for a minute or two until slightly golden.

Add gochujang to pan and cook, stirring for a minute or two, to bloom the flavor of the paste.

Purée canned tomatoes for about 10 seconds in a blender; add to hot pan and lower heat slightly.

Stir tomato purée or passata into the sauce.

Season with a pinch of sugar, kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Cover and adjust heat to maintain a simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Line a baking sheet with a silpat liner or parchment paper.

Use freshest ricotta you can buy--homemade would be great; if cheese is too wet, drain in a colander.

In a medium bowl, combine ground lamb, ricotta and rest of ingredients.

Gently mix together without overworking the lamb.

Dampen hands and roll out meatballs the size of ping pong balls; smaller for bite-size hors d'oeuvres.

Lay out on lined baking sheet.

Bake in oven for 15 minutes (10 minutes for bite-size), turning the pan once midway.

Remove pan from oven and use tongs to add meatballs to the sauce.

Gently braise for 10 to 15 minutes, turning meatballs in the marinara, until just cooked through.

Plate meatballs and top with marinara sauce.

Garnish with julienned mint.

If serving as an hors d'oeuvre, have toothpicks handy for taking and a small bowl of sauce for dipping.

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