

COMPLIANT LENTIL MUSHROOM BALLS WITH MARINARA SAUCE

This recipe is absolutely fabulous. The combination of lentils and mushrooms gives the texture of meat and fennel seeds are a revelation for giving you that true Italian flavour.

Lentil Mushroom Balls (makes 14 big balls)

**Ingredients:**

* 2/3 cup uncooked lentils
* Filtered water
* 1 small onion, diced finely
* 2 garlic cloves, minced or diced finely
* 1 Tbs. lite tamari or Braggs soy sauce (optional)
* ¼ cup tomato paste
* 1 tsp. dried oregano
* 1 tsp. dried basil
* 1 tsp. fennel seeds
* ¼ tsp. no salt seasoning like Mrs. Dash
* 2 cups finely chopped brown mushrooms
* 1 cup rolled oats (gluten-free if you can find it)

**Method:**

1. To make the lentil balls, rinse the lentils and add to a pot and add plenty of filtered water (at least 3-4 cups). Bring to a boil, reduce heat to a simmer, cover and cook for about 40 minutes until the lentils are tender. Drain well and set aside to cool. Note: I usually cook the lentils the night before to speed up the process.

2. In a pan, heat (on medium) a little filtered water and onions, cook until the onions are softened and tender (about 5 minutes).

3. Add the garlic and sauté a minute more until fragrant. Set aside and cool.

4 A. In a food processor, add the lentils, onion mixture, and the remaining lentil ball ingredients. Pulse until everything is blended but not completely smooth.

4.B. I don’t use a food processor. But I have one of those mini electric dicers. I finely chop the onions, garlic, mushrooms and oatmeal in the dicer. In a big bowl, mash the lentils. Add the onion mixture, and the remaining lentil ball ingredients to the lentils. Stir to combine.

5. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Roll the lentil ball mixture into 2–3-inch balls and place them on the baking sheet. Place them in the oven and bake for 30 minutes or until firm but still soft in the middle.

**Compliant Marinara Sauce**

**Ingredients:**

* a little filtered water for ‘frying’
* 1 large onion, diced
* 4 garlic cloves, chopped finely or minced
* 1 Tbs. dried basil
* 1 Tbs. dried oregano
* 1 Tbs. fennel seeds
* ½ tsp. red pepper flakes
* 1 large can diced tomatoes (no added salt)
* 1 cup tomato paste (so use remainder from meatballs plus 1 small can) (no salt added)
* 1 ½ cups filtered water
* 1 tsp. no salt seasoning

**Method:**

1. While the lentil balls are baking, prepare the sauce. In a medium saucepan, heat the water and add the onions and sauté for 5 minutes on medium heat.

2. Add the garlic and spices and cook for a minute until fragrant.

3. Add the tomatoes, tomato paste, water and no salt seasoning and bring to a simmer.

4. Reduce heat to low (2 or 3) cover and cook for about 15 minutes until the flavours have combined.

5. When the lentil balls have finished cooking, toss them with the sauce, and serve garnished with parsley over pasta.

Freezing and Serving Tips

1. These lentil balls and the sauce freeze really well so it is easy to make individual servings. A standard adult serving will include 2 large lentil balls, and 2 cups of sauce.

2. Freeze the meatballs separately from the sauce in a big freezer bag and freeze the sauce in glass containers.

3. Serve over konjac noodles, zoodles (zucchini noodles), palm heart noodles or rice.