

# Buffalo Meatballs in Chipotle Sauce

## FOR THE MEATBALLS

- 1 1/2 pound ground buffalo or beef**
- 3 strips of bacon**
- 1/2 teaspoon thyme**
- 1/2 teaspoon Mexican oregano**
- A small bay leaf**
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin seeds, toasted and ground**
- 1/2 teaspoon black peppercorns**
- 2 teaspoons salt**
- 1/2 cup milk**
- 2 raw eggs**
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled**
- 2 slices good bread**
- 1/2 cup half-cooked organic brown rice**

## FOR THE SAUCE

- 6 chiles dried chipotles**
- 2 tablespoons bacon drippings**
- 1 1/2 pounds ripe tomatoes, broiled**
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced**
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced**
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin seeds**
- salt to taste**
- 2 1/2 cups stock**

Toast all cumin in a small pan over medium flame. Avoid scorching seeds. Grind in spice grinder. Put the herbs, spices, salt, milk, raw egg, and garlic into a blender and blend until smooth. Soak the bread in this mixture until it is mushy, then add it all to the ground meats, along with the rice, and combine well. This quantity will make approximately 24 golf ball sized meatballs Form them and set them aside while you prepare the sauce.

Heat a griddle and heat the chiles, turning them from time to time until they become soft and flexible, Slit the chiles open.

Heat the fat and fry the chiles, flattening them with a spatula, until they are very dark brown. Remove from the pan, leaving the fat, and put into a blender jar with the broiled tomatoes. Blend until smooth.

Reheat the fat in the pan and fry the onion gently, without browning, until soft. Add a little olive oil if needed. Combine the garlic, cumin, and salt together. Add 2 tablespoons of water to the garlic/cumin mixture then scrape into the onions in the pan. Fry, stirring and scraping, over a high flame until almost dry, then add the blended ingredients and fry over a fairly high flame, stirring and scraping the bottom of the pan constantly, until the sauce has reduced and thickened.

Add the broth and sauce to the meatballs. Cover the pan, and cook over a gentle heat, turning the meatballs occasionally, until they are cooked through and spongy...30 to 45 minutes.

This is inspired by a recipe collected by the great Diana Kennedy.