

ROCKY'S KITCHEN · COMFORT FOOD

Classic Swedish Meatballs

Tender beef-and-pork meatballs in a silky allspice cream gravy, with lingonberries and quick pickled cucumber on the side.

Serves 4

Prep 25 min

Cook 25 min

Good with: buttery mashed potatoes, egg noodles, or boiled baby potatoes. Keep the gravy loose enough to spoon over everything.

Make it your own: use ground turkey in place of pork, or add a pinch of white pepper for a more old-school Scandinavian flavor.

Ingredients

MEATBALLS

- 1/2 cup panko breadcrumbs
- 1/3 cup whole milk
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 small yellow onion, very finely grated or minced
- 1 lb ground beef (80/20)
- 1/2 lb ground pork
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 1 tsp kosher salt; 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 tsp ground allspice; 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 2 tbsp neutral oil, for browning

SILKY CREAM GRAVY

- 2 tbsp butter
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 3/4 cups warm beef stock
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

TO SERVE

- Lingonberry preserves or cranberry sauce
- Quick pickled cucumber ribbons, optional
- Chopped dill or parsley

Method

1 Soften the crumbs

Stir panko and milk; let stand 5 minutes. Cook onion in butter over medium-low until soft and translucent, 4–5 minutes. Cool slightly.

2 Mix gently

Combine soaked crumbs, onion, beef, pork, egg, salt, pepper, allspice, and nutmeg. Mix just until combined; overmixing makes meatballs tight.

3 Roll and brown

Wet your hands and roll into 20–24 small balls. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium. Brown in batches, turning often, 6–8 minutes total. Transfer to a plate; they finish in the gravy.

4 Build the gravy

Lower heat to medium-low. Add butter, then flour; cook 1 minute. Whisk in warm stock gradually until smooth. Add cream, Dijon, and Worcestershire; simmer until lightly thickened, 3–4 minutes.

5 Finish and serve

Return meatballs and any juices to the skillet. Simmer gently 6–8 minutes, until cooked through to 160°F. Taste, season, and serve with lingonberries, cucumber, and dill.

ROCKY'S NOTE: If the gravy gets too thick, loosen it with a splash of stock. If it is too thin, simmer uncovered another minute or two—do not add more flour at the end.

SERVE IT RIGHT

Bring the skillet to the table with warm potatoes, lingonberries, and a bright cucumber pickle. The sweet-tart side is the balance that makes the rich gravy sing.

QUICK CUCUMBER

Toss thin cucumber ribbons with a pinch of salt, 1 tsp sugar, and 1 tbsp white vinegar. Let stand while the meatballs cook; drain before serving.

LEFTOVERS

Reheat gently in a covered skillet with a splash of stock or cream. Keep the heat low so the gravy stays smooth and the meatballs stay tender.