

Your Saturday night in...

If you're staying in on Saturday evening, why not try this recipe.....

This fragrant and filling dish is an excellent dinner party choice.

Prep: 40 mins

Cook: 40 mins

Serves: 6



Spiced chicken meatballs with noodles, basil & broth

Ingredients

- 1 large onion, roughly chopped
- Thumb-size piece fresh root ginger
- 1-2 long red chillies, finely chopped (seeds in or out, you decide)
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 6 white peppercorns, crushed
- 20g pack coriander, stalks, roots if you have them and leaves, chopped and kept separate, plus sprigs to finish
- 50ml milk
- 100g fresh white breadcrumbs
- 1kg quality chicken mince
- 3 tbsp vegetable oil

For the broth

- 1½ l chicken stock
- 2 tbsp toasted sesame oil
- 3 tbsp fish sauce

Fish sauce

- 6 star anise, thumb-size piece fresh root ginger, sliced
- ½ tsp black peppercorns
- 8 spring onion
- Spring onions, thinly sliced
- 300g egg noodles, cooked
- sliced chillies to taste (optional)
- 1 small bunch basil, leaves picked

Method

1 Whizz the onion, ginger, chillies, garlic, white pepper and half of the coriander stalks, roots (if using) and leaves in a food processor until finely chopped. Mix the milk and breadcrumbs together in a large bowl. Add the onion mix and chicken into the breadcrumbs, then season. Now, really mix – I mean mix – until the whole thing becomes a paste rather than lumpy. If you have a tabletop mixer, then use that instead of your hands. Shape into small balls around the size of a 50p piece. Place a large frying pan or casserole over a medium heat, add a drizzle of oil then fry the balls until well coloured – about 10 mins. You'll need to do this in batches, adding more oil each time. Set aside.

2 For the broth, put the stock into a large saucepan, bring to the boil, then simmer. Add the sesame oil, fish sauce, ginger, remaining coriander stalks and roots, star anise and peppercorns. Simmer, covered, for 20 mins. Add the spring onions, noodles and chillies, if using. Take 6 large bowls, then divide the noodles between them – tongs are the best tool. Drop in the warm meatballs then ladle in the stock. Scatter with coriander and basil leaves then tuck in.