

Jamie Oliver's Tuna Meatballs or Le Migliori Polpette di Tonno

Adapted from *Jamie's Italy* by Jamie Oliver

for the tomato sauce

olive oil

1 small onion, peeled and finely chopped

4 cloves of garlic, peeled and finely sliced

1 teaspoon dried oregano

2 14-oz. cans of good-quality plum tomatoes

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

red wine vinegar

a small bunch of fresh flat-leaf parsley, leaves picked and roughly chopped

Optional: 1 tbsp honey

for the meatballs

14 oz. tuna

olive oil

1/4 cup pinenuts

1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 teaspoon dried oregano

a handful of fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped

1 3/4 cups stale breadcrumbs

1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan

2 eggs

zest and juice of 1 lemon

Chop the tuna up into 1-inch or so cubes. Pour a good couple of tablespoons of olive oil into a large frying pan and place on the heat. Add the tuna to the pan with the pinenuts and cinnamon. Season lightly with salt and pepper and fry for a minute or so to cook the tuna on all sides and toast the pinenuts. The fish will probably still be a bit raw in the center, that's fine.

Remove from the heat and put the mixture into a bowl. Allow to cool down for 5 minutes, then add the oregano, parsley, breadcrumbs, Parmesan, eggs, lemon zest, and juice to the bowl. Using your hands, really scrunch and mix the flavors into the tuna. The consistency should be like a regular meatball mixture. Divide the mixture and squeeze it into meatballs slightly smaller than a golf ball. If you dip one of your hands in water while shaping, you'll get a nice smooth surface on the meatball. If the mixture's very sticky, add a few more breadcrumbs. Keep the meatballs around the same size and place them on an oiled tray, then put them in the fridge for an hour to let them rest.

Now make your sauce. Place a large pan on the heat, add a couple of tablespoons of olive oil, the onion and garlic, and fry slowly for 5-7 minutes or so, until soft. Add the oregano, the tomatoes, salt, and pepper and bring to a boil. Simmer for 15 minutes or so, then blend until smooth. Taste - it might need a tiny swig of red wine vinegar or some extra seasoning. I opted here to add about a tablespoon of honey. Let it simmer while you finish up the meatballs.

Start boiling your pasta here.

Put the pan you fried the tuna in back on the heat with a little olive oil. Add your meatballs to the pan and jiggle them about until they're golden brown all over.

You might want to do them in batches — when they're done, add them to the tomato sauce, simmer for about 5 minutes. Plate up your pasta and ladle with meatballs and sauce. Sprinkle with chopped parsley, and drizzle with good olive oil.

