



# Beef meatball sliders

## Ingredients

### For the Meatballs:

- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ cup diced onion
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon fennel seeds, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped
- 2 ounces fresh goat cheese (about ¼ cup)
- ½ pound merguez sausage (spicy lamb) or hot Italian sausage, casings removed
- 1 pound ground lamb
- ½ cup breadcrumbs
- 2 large eggs
- Kosher salt, to taste

### For the Sauce:

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 (28-ounce) can whole San Marzano tomatoes, crushed by hand
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- Kosher salt, to taste
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano

### For the Sliders:

- ½ pound fresh goat cheese (about 1 cup)
- 2½ tablespoons mascarpone cheese
- 1½ tablespoons whole milk
- ⅛ teaspoon dried oregano
- ¼ teaspoon chopped fresh rosemary
- ¼ teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- ¼ teaspoon chopped fresh dill
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 24 slider rolls
- Pickled sliced cucumbers, for serving

## Instructions

**1. Prepare the Meatball Base:**

Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the diced onion and cook until softened, about 3 minutes. Stir in garlic and cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly.

**2. Toast the Spices:**

Add coriander, chopped fennel seeds, and rosemary to the skillet. Toast for 1 minute until fragrant. Transfer this mixture to a large bowl and chill until cool.

**3. Form the Goat Cheese Balls:**

Roll the goat cheese into small ½-inch marble-sized balls. Set aside.

**4. Make the Meatball Mixture:**

To the cooled spice mixture, add the sausage, ground lamb, breadcrumbs, eggs, and ½ teaspoon salt. Mix gently by hand until just combined.

**5. Shape the Meatballs:**

Divide the mixture into 24 small ovals (about 2 tablespoons each). Press your thumb into the center of each oval to create a small indentation. Place a goat cheese ball inside, then mold the meat around it, rolling into smooth balls. Refrigerate until ready to cook.

**6. Prepare the Sauce:**

In a large pot, heat ¼ cup olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the diced onion and cook until softened, about 1 minute. Add the crushed tomatoes with their juices, red pepper flakes, ½ teaspoon salt, and sugar. Simmer, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 10 minutes. Stir in the oregano.

**7. Cook the Meatballs in Sauce:**

Gently add the meatballs to the sauce. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer until meatballs are cooked through, about 10 minutes.

**8. Make the Goat Cheese Spread:**

In a bowl, beat together goat cheese, mascarpone, and milk with a wooden spoon until smooth. Stir in oregano, rosemary, thyme, dill, ¼ teaspoon salt, and a pinch of black pepper.

**9. Assemble the Sliders:**

Spread the goat cheese mixture on each slider roll. Top with a meatball, some pickled cucumbers, and spoon extra sauce over the meatballs.