

# Ricotta and Oregano Lamb Meatballs



**Serves 6**   **Prep 30 mins**

**Cooking 1h**

**Challenge**

## Ingredients

2 large onions (450g), peeled and roughly chopped

2 medium carrots (225g), roughly chopped

2 large celery stalks (100g), roughly chopped

5 tbsp olive oil

4 sprigs fresh oregano

400g tinned chopped tomatoes

½ tsp sugar

500g lamb mince (20% fat), or pork mince

100g fresh breadcrumbs (3-4 slices crustless bread)

250g ricotta

80g parmesan, finely grated

1 egg

½ tsp dried oregano

20g chopped parsley + 5g extra to finish

500ml chicken or vegetable stock

1. Chop the onions finely in a food processor. Put 1/2 the chopped onions in a large sauté pan with a lid, & the rest in a large bowl. Put the carrot & celery in the food processor & pulse until finely chopped.
2. Tip the chopped carrot & celery into to the onion pan, & add 2 ½ tbsp oil & all the fresh oregano. With the heat on medium-high, cook, stirring occasionally, for 10-12 mins, until the veggies soften. Stir in the tomatoes, sugar, 250ml water, 1/2 tsp salt & a grind of black pepper & cook for another 13-15 mins, stirring occasionally, until the sauce thickens. Take the pan off the heat.
3. Meanwhile, for the meatballs: in the bowl of chopped onions add the lamb, breadcrumbs, ricotta, 60g grated parmesan, egg, dried oregano, parsley, ¾ of a tsp of salt & some black pepper. Combine with your hands, then shape into 20 - 24 balls weighing about 50g each.
4. Put 1½ tbsp of the remaining olive oil in a large frying pan on a high heat and, once it's hot, add half the meatballs and sear them for 2-3 mins, turning them regularly, until browned evenly all over. Transfer to a tray or plate, then repeat with the final tbsp of oil and the rest of the meatballs.
5. Discard the oregano sprigs, pour in the stock & stir well. Put the pan on medium-high heat & nestle the meatballs in the sauce, cover the pan & cook for 15 mins. Take off the lid & cook for another 10-12 mins until the sauce thickens. Serve with the extra parmesan & parsley.