

Thanksgiving Mini Meatloaf – Comfort du Jour

I've whipped up a batch of miniature meatloaves that have all the same flavors you'd expect for Thanksgiving. These little minis have a base of seasoned ground turkey, blended with sage stuffing mix and onions, a middle layer of sauteed kale and onions with mushroom seasoning, and a rich and fluffy top layer of Yukon gold and sweet potatoes. They're conveniently portioned for sharing or freezing, and if you don't have a mini loaf pan, you can make them instead in a regular or jumbo muffin tin.

Each bite of mini meatloaf delivers the savory flavor that I've been craving every day since the beginning of November. Best of all, these are a snap to make, and they are ready for the oven in less than an hour.

INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup Pepperidge Farm herb seasoned dry stuffing mix
1/4 cup whole milk
Extra virgin olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped and divided between layers
2 fat handfuls washed kale leaves, chopped (heavy stems removed)* (see notes)
1 tsp. Umami seasoning (powdered mushroom flavor from Trader Joe's)*
1 large sweet potato, scrubbed clean and baked*
2 large Yukon gold potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
3 Tbsp. butter, melted
1 egg white
1/4 cup grated parm-romano blend
1 lb. ground turkey*
1 large egg
1/2 tsp. poultry seasoning
2 Tbsp. chopped sun-dried tomatoes

*NOTES

I had a big bag of kale already in the fridge, but if you prefer, you could substitute spinach. I think shredded brussels sprouts would also be excellent here.

Can't get your hands on the umami seasoning? No problem. Chop up a few mushrooms very fine and toss them into the skillet ahead of the kale, to give them time to sweat out their moisture. Add a sprinkling of garlic powder, too.

I've listed the sweet potato as "baked" because I had one leftover. If you prefer, cut up the sweet potato and cook on the stovetop along with the Yukon golds.

If you opt for ground turkey breast, the mixture may be a bit drier than regular ground turkey. Consider adding a drizzle of olive oil to the meat mixture to make up the moisture difference.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. In a small bowl, combine the dry stuffing mix with the milk and allow it to rest a bit. Stir the mixture occasionally to ensure all liquid gets absorbed and the mixture becomes paste-like.
3. Place cut-up potatoes in a medium pot and boil gently over medium heat until they are just barely fork tender. Drain and transfer to a bowl. Add butter, egg white, parmesan and freshly ground black pepper. Stir to combine.
4. While potatoes cook, place a non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add a drizzle of olive oil and sauté half of the chopped onions until softened and somewhat translucent. Season with poultry seasoning, salt and pepper.
5. Remove half of the cooked onions to a large bowl, along with the raw ground turkey. Add egg, sun-dried tomatoes, stuffing paste, salt and pepper. Stir to combine, then set aside.
6. To the same onion skillet, add the chopped kale and sauté (use a bit more oil if needed) until kale is wilted and softened. Sprinkle with umami mushroom seasoning and stir to blend.
7. Time to assemble the mini meatloaves! Spray the cups of your mini pan with olive oil spray, then fill each cavity about halfway with the turkey mixture. Press down with a fork or spoon to ensure the meat is packed thoroughly to the edges. Next, divide the kale mixture over the turkey layer, and press down again. Finally, top the loaves with the mashed potato mixture.
8. Press the potato mixture with the tines of a fork to leave lines on top.
9. Bake the meatloaves for 35-45 minutes (depending on the size of your mini pan cavities—for muffin tins, check doneness after 35 minutes. My meatloaf pan had cavities for 8 mini loaves and it took 45 minutes).