

LEMON, ROSEMARY AND FENNEL POLPETTE WITH SPRING GREENS



You can adapt this recipe with any greens in season, such as purple sprouting broccoli, spinach, cabbage, chard or even some lemon-dressed rocket. Just buy what looks best.

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 600g quality pork mince (with a good fat content)
- 1 egg, beaten
- 70g fresh white breadcrumbs
- 2 tbsp grated parmesan, plus extra to serve
- 120ml milk (ideally whole milk)
- Zest of 1/2 lemon
- 3 sprigs of rosemary, very finely chopped
- 1 tbsp crushed fennel seeds
- 3 bay leaves
- 1-2 lemons
- 250ml chicken stock (or water)
- 500ml white wine
- Heaped tbsp capers
- 30g unsalted butter
- Sea salt and black pepper
- Extra virgin olive oil, for finishing and cooking

Method

1. Add the breadcrumbs and milk to a small bowl and leave to sit for 5 minutes, allowing the bread to absorb the liquid.
2. Place the pork mince in a large bowl and season generously with salt and pepper. Add the parmesan, soaked breadcrumbs and milk, chopped rosemary, fennel seeds and beaten egg. Mix well, then add the zest of half a lemon and mix again. Shape the mixture into small golf-ball sized meatballs and transfer to the fridge to firm up for at least 30 minutes, or overnight if you have time.
3. Preheat the oven to 180°C fan. Thinly slice a lemon into rounds and set aside. Heat a large ovenproof pan over a medium heat. Add a generous glug of olive oil and, once hot, brown the meatballs well on all sides. Pour in the white wine and turn up the heat to deglaze the pan. Once the wine has reduced slightly, add the chicken stock (or water), capers and butter. Bring to a gentle simmer, then tuck in the bay leaves and arrange lemon slices over the meatballs.
4. Transfer the pan to the oven and cook for 20 minutes, until the polpette are cooked through and the sauce is rich and glossy. Season to taste, then rest for 5 minutes before serving.
5. Meanwhile, boil the spring greens in plenty of well-salted water for 3-4 minutes, until just tender. Drain well.
6. To serve, plate the spring greens and spoon over the polpette with the cooking juices. Finish with extra grated parmesan and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil. Serve with polenta, mashed potato, or some good bread for mopping up the sauce.