

Kibbie Balls (*Lebanese Meatballs*)

Makes 2 Dozen (depending on the size you want)



Shown served with Lebanese rice, pickled turnips and cabbage salad

Basic Kibbie Ingredients

**This becomes the outer shell of the meatball*

- 1 ½ pounds lean ground leg of lamb or lean ground beef
- 1 cup extra fine (#1) cracked wheat (bulghar)
- 1 teaspoon Kosher salt and ¾ teaspoon freshly ground to taste

Filling Ingredients:

- 3 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium brown onion, finely chopped
- ⅔ cups pine nuts, toasted
- 1 pound lean ground leg of lamb or lean ground beef
- 1 teaspoon Kosher salt and ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ½ teaspoon ground allspice

For the Pan:

- 1 cup clarified or rendered butter (samneh)

Steps

1. Rinse the bulghar in a mesh strainer then place it in a medium-size bowl. Cover the bulghar with water (about 1-inch above the top) allowing it to soak for 30 minutes. Allow the wheat to absorb most or all of the water.
2. **Filling:** In a large pot over medium-high heat begin sauteing the onions and olive oil until onions are translucent. Add the pound of ground lamb or beef and using a large spoon or meat masher, break up the large pieces of meat so that the meat is in medium-size crumbles. Once the meat is fully cooked (browned), remove the pot from the heat and drain the liquid from the meat. Transfer the meat/onion mixture to a large bowl. Add the toasted pine nuts. Season with salt, pepper and allspice. Mix and taste it before moving on to the next step.
3. **Kibbie Mixture:** In a large bowl add the 1 ½ pounds lean ground lamb or beef along with the bulghar wheat (make sure you squeeze the wheat to ensure you are not adding too much water). With your hands work the meat and bulghar together until it is well-incorporated. You may need a bowl of ice water to dip your hands into to add a little moisture to the meat to help blend it with the wheat. Be sure to season the mixture with salt and pepper.
4. **Preheat the oven to 350°F. Prepare a sheet pan by pouring or brushing the bottom with about ½ cup of samneh.** To assemble the kibbie balls, take a golf ball size amount of the kibbie mixture, form it into a cup. Place a tablespoon amount of the filling in the cup. Pinch the meat to seal the filling in. You may need to use a little water on your hands to achieve smooth kibbie balls. Usually these are shaped like little footballs. Place the shaped balls onto the prepared baking sheet pans. Pour/brush the remaining samneh on top of the balls and bake for 25 - 30 minutes. Serve with rice and salad or as part of a mezze platter.