

Kibbeh Stuffed Meatballs

Traditional Middle Eastern kibbeh stuffed meatballs made with bulgur wheat, ground beef filling, and aromatic spices. Can be fried or boiled.

40 min

PREP

30 min

COOK

1h 10min

TOTAL

6

SERVINGS

Hard

DIFFICULTY

Kibbeh Stuffed Meatballs

Ingredients

- 1.1 lb ground beef
- 5 onion
- 2 green pepper
- 1 tbsp black pepper
- 0.5 tbsp chili flakes
- 1 tbsp salt
- 5 cup cracked wheat
- 1 cup flour
- 0.5 cup semolina

Instructions

- 1 Prepare the bulgur shell**

Combine 1 cup fine bulgur wheat with 1/2 cup semolina in a large bowl. Finely grate 1 onion and add to the mixture along with 1 tablespoon flour, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 tablespoon black pepper. Knead the mixture with your hands for 3-4 minutes until it forms a cohesive, pliable dough that holds together when squeezed.
- 2 Make the meat filling**

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over medium heat (180°C/350°F). Add the remaining diced onion and cook for 3-4 minutes until softened and translucent. Add 1.1 pounds ground beef and cook for 8-10 minutes, breaking it apart with a wooden spoon, until browned and no pink remains.
- 3 Season the cooked beef with salt, black pepper, and any remaining spices. Remove from heat and let cool completely, about 15-20 minutes, before proceeding to the next step.**
- 4 Shape the kibbeh shells**

Wet your hands with cold water to prevent sticking. Take a portion of bulgur mixture about the size of a large egg and roll it between your palms into a smooth oval. Use your index finger to carefully hollow out the center, creating a thin-walled shell about 1/4 inch thick.
- 5 Fill and seal**

Spoon 1-2 tablespoons of the cooled meat filling into each bulgur shell. Carefully bring the edges together to completely enclose the filling, pinching firmly to seal. Roll gently between your palms to form a smooth, football-shaped kibbeh.

- 6 Repeat the shaping and filling process until all bulgur mixture and filling are used, keeping finished kibbeh on a plate covered with damp towel to prevent drying.
- 7 **Cook the kibbeh**
Bring 5 cups salted water to a gentle simmer in a large pot over medium heat. Carefully add the kibbeh and cook for 15-20 minutes until they float to the surface and feel firm to the touch. Remove with a slotted spoon and serve immediately.

Tips

Soak the bulgur wheat in cold water for 30 minutes before using, then squeeze out excess water with your hands to achieve the right consistency for shaping.

Keep your hands slightly damp with cold water while shaping the kibbeh to prevent the bulgur mixture from sticking and to help seal the edges properly.

Cook the meat filling completely and let it cool before using - hot filling will make the bulgur shell difficult to work with and may cause it to fall apart.

Make a small test piece first and fry or boil it to check the seasoning and texture before shaping all the kibbeh.

If frying, maintain oil temperature at 350°F and don't overcrowd the pan, as this will lower the oil temperature and result in greasy kibbeh.

For boiled kibbeh, add them to gently simmering salted water and cook for 15-20 minutes until they float to the surface and feel firm.

Don't let the shaped kibbeh sit too long before cooking, as the bulgur shell can become soft and difficult to handle - cook within 2 hours of shaping.