

Turkish Yuvalama

Traditional Turkish Yuvalama soup with tender lamb meatballs in creamy yogurt broth. A beloved Gaziantep specialty perfect for special occasions.

1h

PREP

40 min

COOK

1h 40min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Hard

DIFFICULTY

Turkish Yuvalama

Ingredients

- 1 lb stew meat
- 1 cup boiled chickpea
- 0 water
- 2 tsp salt
- 2 tsp black pepper
- 2 cup strained yogurt
- 2 tsp chili flakes
- 4 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp dry mint
- 0.5 lb ground beef
- 1 lb rice flour
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsp flour

Instructions

- 1 Prepare the lamb broth**

Place 1 pound cubed lamb in a large pot with 8 cups cold water. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce heat to medium-low and simmer covered for 1.5 hours until the meat is fork-tender and easily shreds.
- 2 Make the meatball mixture**

Combine 0.5 pound ground beef, 1 cup rice flour, 2 teaspoons salt, 2 teaspoons black pepper, and 2 teaspoons red pepper flakes in a bowl. Knead with your hands for 3-4 minutes until the mixture holds together when squeezed and feels cohesive.
- 3 Roll the meat mixture into small meatballs about 1/2 inch in diameter, roughly the size of chickpeas. Keep your hands lightly damp with water to prevent the mixture from sticking.**
- 4 Cook the meatballs**

Add the meatballs and 1 pound pre-cooked chickpeas to the simmering lamb broth. Cook for 15 minutes, stirring very gently to avoid breaking the meatballs.

5 Prepare the yogurt mixture

Whisk together 2 cups yogurt, 1 egg, and 4 tablespoons flour in a bowl until completely smooth with no lumps. Gradually add 1 cup of the hot lamb broth while whisking constantly to temper the mixture and prevent curdling.

6 Pour the tempered yogurt mixture into the soup while stirring gently with a wooden spoon. Heat to just below boiling point (about 200°F/93°C) and maintain for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking.

7 Finish and serve

Heat 1 tablespoon butter with 2 tablespoons oil in a small pan over medium heat until the butter melts. Add dried mint and fry for 30 seconds until fragrant and crispy. Drizzle the mint oil over the soup and serve immediately while hot.

Tips

Chill the meatball mixture in the refrigerator for 30 minutes before rolling to make shaping easier and prevent the meatballs from falling apart during cooking.

Always use full-fat yogurt for the best texture and to reduce the risk of curdling when tempering with the hot broth.

Keep a small bowl of water nearby when rolling meatballs to prevent the mixture from sticking to your hands.

Temper the yogurt gradually by adding only one ladle of hot broth at a time while whisking constantly to maintain a smooth consistency.

Soak dried chickpeas overnight and boil them until tender before adding to the soup for the best texture and flavor.

Make your own rice flour by processing soaked and dried rice in a food processor for fresher flavor than store-bought versions.

Never let the soup come to a rolling boil after adding the yogurt mixture, as this will cause immediate curdling.

Prepare the mint butter garnish just before serving to preserve the fresh aroma and bright green color of the herbs.