Chicken Parmesan Meatballs

Ingredients:

- 1 $^{1}/_{2}$ cups panko bread crumbs
- $^{1}/_{4}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese, plus more for topping
- 1 $^{1}/_{2}$ tsp. table salt
- 1 lb ground chicken
- 1 large egg
- $^{1}/_{2}$ tsp. Italian seasoning
- 20 small pearl-size Mozzarella balls
- Olive oil, for shallow frying
- Jarred marinara sauce
- Cooked pasta, for serving

Instructions:

- Preheat the oven to 400^{o}
- In medium bowl, combine 1 cup of the panko with the Parmesan and $^{1}/_{2}$ tsp. of the salt. Give a stir and set aside.
- In a large bowl, combine the chicken, the remaining panko, the egg, pepper, garlic powder, and Italian seasoning. Gently mix to combine.
- To make a meatball, scoop up 2 TBSP of the chicken mixture. Ball it up a bit and insert one of the little mozzarella balls or cubes into the center. Use your fingers to wrap the chicken mixture around the cheese, concealing it completely. Roll the meatball in the panko mixture to coat. Set the meatball on wax paper and continue to make the rest of the meatballs.
- Pour $^{1}/_{4}$ to $^{1}/_{2}$ inch of olive oil into a large skillet. Heat over medium-high heat until the oil starts to shimmer. Add the meatballs and cook until slightly browned all over, 2-3 minutes per side.
- Use a slotted spoon to remove them to a sheet pan or baking dish. Bake until the chicken is cooked through and the cheese is melty in the center (cut one in half to make sure), 10-12 minutes.
- Spread marinara sauce over the meatballs and crown each with a shake of Parmesan. Return to the oven to bake a few minutes to warm the marinara.
- Serve with your favorite pasta, warmed and mixed with more marinara sauce to taste.

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