

# Baked Meatball Parmesan with Pasta

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*1/4 bunch (1/4 cup) fresh Italian parsley, chopped  
1 package (0.75 Ounce) fresh basil, chopped and divided  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 pound ground beef  
1/2 cup whole milk ricotta cheese  
6 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese, divided  
1 egg (or 1/4 cup egg substitute)  
1/4 cup Italian-style panko bread crumbs  
2 tablespoons minced garlic  
3/4 teaspoon Kosher salt  
1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)  
8 ounces spaghetti pasta  
1 jar (24 ounce) marinara pasta sauce  
2 cups mozzarella cheese, shredded*

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees.

Bring water to a boil for the pasta.

Coat a 13x9-inch baking dish with oil.

In a large bowl, the beef, ricotta, four tablespoons of Parmesan, the egg, panko, parsley, 1/4 cup of basil, garlic, salt and red pepper (if using). Mix until blended. Roll the beef mixture into two-inch meatballs (about fourteen). Place the meatballs into snug rows in the baking dish (wash hands).

Bake for 10 minutes or until browned.

Cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain any fat from the baking dish, then pour the pasta sauce over the meatballs.

Bake for 10 to 12 more minutes until the meatballs are firm and 160 degrees.

In a bowl, combine the mozzarella and the remaining two tablespoons of Parmesan. Top the meatballs with the cheese mixture.

Bake for 5 to 6 minutes more or until the cheese has melted and the sauce is bubbly.

Serve the meatballs and sauce over the pasta. Top with the remaining pasta and additional Parmesan, if desired.

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Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 2631 Calories; 215g Fat (74.1% calories from fat); 152g Protein; 17g Carbohydrate; 1g Dietary Fiber; 674mg Cholesterol; 3333mg Sodium. Exchanges: 21 1/2 Lean Meat; 1 1/2 Vegetable; 30 1/2 Fat.