

2018 Foothill Zinfandel - Slow Braised Lamb Meatballs with Cinnamon, Tomatoes and Rosemary

Ingredients

Meatballs

1 medium onion, peeled and finely diced
¼ cup heavy cream
2 egg yolks, extra-large
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground cumin
Pinch red-pepper flakes
Pinch cayenne pepper, or to taste
2 pounds ground lamb
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 cup breadcrumbs
¼ cup chopped parsley

Sauce

1 28-ounce can whole tomatoes
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 small sprig fresh rosemary
Red-pepper flakes to taste
1 medium onion, peeled and diced
½ teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
½ teaspoon ground cumin
Pinch ground cinnamon
Pinch cayenne pepper
1 bay leaf
½ teaspoon white sugar
2 t orange zest
1 3-inch strip of orange peel
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
Mint and feta for garnish

Directions

Preheat broiler. In a large bowl, mix together the onion, cream, egg yolks, cinnamon, cumin, red pepper and cayenne. Add the lamb to the bowl, and season with salt and pepper. Add the breadcrumbs and parsley, and combine the mixture well. Shape the meat into balls that are a little larger than golf balls. Grease large cast iron skillet with olive oil, and put the meatballs onto it, spaced evenly. Place beneath the broiler, and cook, turning once or twice, until the meatballs are well browned, approximately 5 to 7 minutes, then set meatballs aside. Turn oven to 300.

Meanwhile, make the sauce. In a food processor, quickly process tomatoes and set aside. Heat skillet over medium-high heat for a minute, then add olive oil, rosemary and red pepper and shake to combine. Cook for another minute, then add onion, thyme, cumin, cinnamon, cayenne and bay leaf and sauté until the onions are translucent, approximately 5 to 7 minutes. Add tomatoes, sugar, orange zest, along with salt and pepper. Cook for 8 to 10 minutes over medium-low heat, until reduced by a third. Adjust seasoning. Transfer the meatballs to the sauce, putting them about ¼ inch from each other. Bake for about 40 minutes until the sauce is bubbling and the meatballs are cooked through. Top with crumbled feta and torn mint.

Pair with the 2018 Foothill Zinfandel.