

Italian Cauliflower Meatballs - Polpette di Cavolfiore

Prep Time: 20 minutes **Cook Time:** 20 minutes **Total Time:** 40 minutes

Servings: 4 **Yield:** About 14-18 meatballs

Ingredients

For the cauliflower mixture

- 1.1 lb (500 g) cauliflower
- 1/4 cup (25 g) finely grated Pecorino Romano, optional
- 1/4 cup (25 g) finely grated Parmigiano Reggiano
- 1 large egg
- 2 tablespoons breadcrumbs, plus more if needed
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

For the coating

- 1 large egg, beaten
- About 3/4 cup (75-90 g) breadcrumbs, as needed
- Extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling

Instructions

1. Cook the cauliflower

Clean the cauliflower, remove the outer leaves and tough part of the stem, and cut it into 4 large pieces. Steam for about 10 minutes, or until tender enough to pierce easily with a fork. Do not overcook. Let cool slightly.

2. Mash the cauliflower

Separate the cooked cauliflower into florets and transfer them to a large bowl. Mash thoroughly with a fork until coarse and fairly uniform.

3. Prepare the mixture

Add 1 egg, Parmigiano Reggiano, Pecorino Romano, 2 tablespoons breadcrumbs, parsley, salt, and black pepper. Mix well. If the mixture is too soft or sticky to shape, add 1-2 additional tablespoons breadcrumbs, a little at a time.

4. Shape the meatballs

Lightly wet your hands. Shape the mixture into balls about 1 1/2-2 inches (4-5 cm) in diameter. You should get approximately 14-18 meatballs.

5. Bread the meatballs

Place the beaten egg in one shallow bowl and the breadcrumbs in another. Dip each cauliflower ball in the beaten egg, then roll in breadcrumbs until evenly coated.

6. Bake

Preheat a convection oven to 350 F (180 C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Arrange the meatballs on the sheet, drizzle lightly with extra virgin olive oil, and bake for about 20 minutes, or until golden brown. Turn halfway through.

cooking if needed for even browning. For extra crispness, broil for the final 1-2 minutes, watching carefully.

Notes

- If you omit Pecorino Romano, use about 1/2 cup (50 g) Parmigiano Reggiano total.
- Let the steamed cauliflower release excess moisture before mashing so the mixture does not become too soft.
- Add breadcrumbs gradually; the mixture should stay tender, not dry.
- For an air fryer version, cook at 375 F (190 C) for about 12-15 minutes, turning halfway through.

Nutrition Facts

Per serving	Approx. amount
Calories	220 kcal
Protein	11 g
Carbohydrates	18 g
Fat	12 g
Saturated Fat	5 g
Fiber	4 g
Sugar	3 g
Sodium	470 mg

Nutrition values are approximate and may vary depending on the exact ingredients used.