

**COOK'S**  
ILLUSTRATED

# Spanish-Style Meatballs in Almond Sauce (Albóndigas)



## WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

To streamline the process of making tender tapas-style meatballs in a flavorful, nicely thickened almond sauce, we started by pulsing ground pork, garlic, parsley, egg, and a panade of bread and water in a food processor. After shaping the mixture into 1-inch balls, we skipped browning, instead cooking the meatballs in a mixture of white wine, chicken broth, and softened onion flavored with paprika and saffron. This gentler method quickly cooked the meatballs through without our having to maneuver them much. For the picada, which thickens and flavors the sauce, we ground blanched almonds and bread to ensure that they were quite fine and then fried them in oil. We then mixed in minced garlic and parsley before stirring the picada into the sauce. A splash of sherry vinegar and a sprinkling of fresh parsley at the end added brightness to balance the flavors.

## INGREDIENTS

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### *Picada*

- ¼** cup slivered almonds
- 1** slice hearty white sandwich bread, torn into 1-inch pieces
- 2** tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

## INSTRUCTIONS

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Sometimes fully cooked ground pork retains a slightly pink hue; trust your thermometer. These meatballs can be served as an appetizer with toothpicks or as a main course alongside a vegetable and potatoes or rice.

**Total Time:** 1¼ hours

- 1. For the picada:** Process almonds in food processor until finely

**SERVES 4 AS A MAIN  
DISH**

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**3** tablespoons minced fresh parsley

**2** garlic cloves, minced

### *Meatballs*

**1** slice hearty white sandwich bread, torn into 1-inch pieces

**1** large egg

**2** tablespoons water

**2** tablespoons chopped fresh parsley, divided

**2** garlic cloves, minced

**1** teaspoon table salt

**½** teaspoon pepper

**1** pound ground pork

**1** tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

**½** cup finely chopped onion

**½** teaspoon paprika

**1** cup chicken broth

**½** cup dry white wine

**¼** teaspoon saffron threads, crumbled

**1** teaspoon sherry vinegar

ground, about 20 seconds. Add bread and process until bread is finely ground, about 15 seconds. Transfer almond-bread mixture to 12-inch nonstick skillet. Add oil and cook over medium heat, stirring often, until mixture is golden brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer to bowl. Stir in parsley and garlic and set aside. Wipe skillet clean with paper towels.

**2. For the meatballs:** Process bread in now-empty processor until finely ground, about 15 seconds. Add egg, water, 1 tablespoon parsley, garlic, salt, and pepper and process until smooth paste forms, about 20 seconds, scraping down sides of bowl as necessary. Add pork and pulse until combined, about 5 pulses.

**3.** Remove processor blade. Using your moistened hands, form generous 1 tablespoon pork mixture into 1-inch round meatball and transfer to plate; repeat with remaining pork mixture to form about 24 meatballs.

**4.** Heat oil in now-empty skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Add onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, 4 to 6 minutes. Add paprika and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add broth and wine and bring to simmer. Stir in saffron. Add meatballs and adjust heat to maintain simmer. Cover and cook until meatballs register 160 degrees, 6 to 8 minutes, flipping meatballs once.

**5.** Stir in picada and continue to cook, uncovered, until sauce has thickened slightly, 1 to 2 minutes longer. Off heat, stir in vinegar. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to platter, sprinkle with remaining 1 tablespoon parsley, and serve.