



“All the Parms” Meatball Skillet Bake

March 14, 2024

Can't decide between Chicken Parm and Eggplant Parm? You don't have to! In this easy, super-streamlined version, we give both eggplant and chicken the parm treatment in one pan! Plus, there's no dredging or frying. Instead, top the dish with a crispy-cheesy crust and use some simple shortcuts from the supermarket: jarred pasta sauce, orzo pasta, fresh or frozen fully-cooked chicken meatballs, and shredded mozzarella. It's a hearty meal that comes together in minutes, but tastes like a slow-cooked Sunday Supper!

Serves 4-6

Ingredients:

- 1 medium eggplant, cut into ½” cubes
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 (24 ounce) jar tomato sauce
- 1 ½ cups chicken broth
- 8oz (1 ⅓ cups; Half a box) orzo pasta
- 1 (12oz) package fully-cooked chicken meatballs, thawed if frozen
- ¾ cup grated mozzarella
- ⅓ cup grated parmesan
- ⅓ cup panko bread crumbs
- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves, for garnish
- Kosher salt & freshly ground black pepper
- Olive oil

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. In a large oven-proof skillet or Dutch oven with a tight-fitting lid, heat 3 tablespoons of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add cubed eggplant and cook for 5-7 minutes, or until lightly golden brown in spots. Add tomato paste, stir, and cook until it turns rust colored.
2. Add orzo and pour tomato sauce into the pan. Add chicken broth to the tomato sauce jar and replace lid tightly. Shake the jar and pour the contents into the pan. Stir to combine, and bring to a boil. Cover, and reduce heat to low. Simmer for 8 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent orzo from sticking to the bottom of the pan. Cook until sauce has thickened slightly and the orzo is cooked through, but still al dente.
3. Add chicken meatballs to sauce and stir to combine. Sprinkle with grated mozzarella, parmesan, and panko bread crumbs. Place in the oven and bake until mozzarella is melted, and breadcrumbs are golden brown, 10-15 minutes.
4. Serve in bowls topped with fresh basil, more parm (if desired), and a drizzle of good olive oil.



***Notes**

If you prefer to make your meatballs from scratch, use your favorite recipe, but be sure to cook them almost all the way through in the skillet, before moving on to browning the eggplant.