

## **SPAGHETTI AND ITALIAN MEATBALLS IN TOMATO CAPER SAUCE**

*(adapted from Food and Wine, December 2010)*

*for the sauce:*

1 can of whole, peeled tomatoes (28 oz)  
2 Tbs olive oil  
1 Tbs capers, drained and chopped  
1 tsp dried oregano  
salt and pepper

*for the meatballs:*

1/2 cup white bread, crust removed, roughly diced  
3-5 Tbs milk  
1/2 pound ground pork  
1/2 pound ground beef  
1 egg, beaten  
8 pitted kalamata olives, diced  
1/8 cup freshly grated Parmigiano cheese  
2 Tbs fresh parsley leaves, minced  
1 tsp salt

Puree the tomatoes in a blender or food processor. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet, add the tomatoes and bring to a boil. Simmer for 5 minutes, add the capers and oregano. Simmer for a couple more minutes, season with salt and pepper and keep warm while you prepare the meatballs.

Cover the bread with milk: soak it well. Drain any excess and reserve the bread. In a large bowl, mix both types of meat, add the softened bread, egg, olives, cheese, parsley, and salt. Wet your hands with cold water and very gently form the mixture into 1.5 inch diameter meatballs. You can prepare the meatballs hours in advance.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper (or aluminum foil) and bake the meatballs in a 400F oven for 20 minutes, turning them once during baking. Remove them from the oven, and transfer to the skillet with the tomato sauce. Gently simmer the meatballs and sauce together for 10 to 15 minutes over gentle heat.

Meanwhile, boil some spaghetti, drain, place back in the pan and add some of the tomato sauce. Place back on top of the stove to heat pasta and sauce together for a couple of minutes. Transfer to a serving dish, add the meatballs, and serve with fresh Parmigiano cheese.