

Slow Cooker Honey Buffalo Meatballs

Tender juicy slow cooker Honey Buffalo Meatballs simmered in the most tantalizing sweet heat sauce that everyone goes crazy for! Perfect appetizer or delicious, easy meal with rice!

 Course	Appetizer, Main Dish
 Cuisine	American
 Prep Time	20 minutes
 Cook Time	2 hours
 Total Time	2 hours 20 minutes
 Servings	70 meatballs

Ingredients

Meatballs

- 2 pounds lean ground beef
- 2 eggs
- 22 saltine crackers, crushed (approx. 1 cup)
- 1/3 cup [dried minced onion](#)
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 tsp EACH garlic pwdr, onion pwdr, salt
- 1/2 tsp EACH chili pwdr, smoked paprika, ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon [pepper](#)

Honey Buffalo Sauce

- 1/4 cup Frank's Red Hot Original Sauce, plus more to taste
- 1/4 cup + 1 tablespoon honey
- 1/4 cup [apricot preserves](#)
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons [reduced sodium soy sauce](#)
- 1 1/2 tablespoons [cornstarch](#)

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 450F degrees. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, add eggs and gently whisk. Add all remaining Meatball Ingredients and mix until well combined. Roll meat mixture into desired meatball size**. Place meatballs onto prepared baking sheet and bake for 8 minutes, or until lightly browned.
3. Meanwhile, add all of the Honey Buffalo Sauce Ingredients to a medium bowl and whisk to combine (only use 1/4 cup hot sauce at this point. You can add more hot sauce to taste at the end of cooking).
4. Line the bottom of your slow cooker with meatballs, drizzle with some Honey Buffalo Sauce, then remaining meatballs followed by the remaining Sauce.

5. Cover and cook on low heat for 2-4 hours, gently stirring every hour. When done, taste and stir in additional hot wings sauce (I add 1 1/2 more tablespoons which is pretty spicy.) Keep warm until serving.

Notes

Don't miss the "how to make" recipe video at the top of the post!

**I recommend DOUBLING the Sauce as most readers find they love the sauce so much they wish they had doubled it - or say they always double the sauce when they make it. :)

Tips for Slow Cooker Meatballs

- **Slow Cooker Line.** Try using a crock pot liner for effortless cleanup!
- **Saltine substitute.** You may substitute the saltine crackers for Ritz crackers.
- **Uniform meatballs.** I suggest using a cookie scoop to roll your meatballs so they are a uniform size and cook evenly.
- **Meatball Size.** The size of the meatballs is totally personal preference, but I like to make smaller meatballs when using as an appetizer and larger meatballs when serving as a dinner.
- **Meatball quantity.** This slow cooker meatball recipe will make approximately 70 meatballs using 1" cookie scoop; 35 meatballs using 2" cookie scoop.
- **Always brown meatballs.** Browning the meatballs in the oven before adding to the crock pot is essential. It seals in the juices, helps them not break apart in the slow cooker, and speeds up the cooking time.
- **Double sauce.** This slow cooker meatball recipe does not make saucy meatballs, but more of a glaze for appetizer meatballs. You will want to double the sauce if serving as a main course.
- **Cooking time.** The size of the meatballs as well as the size, age of your slow cooker will affect the cooking time so plan accordingly.
- **Test for doneness.** Test a buffalo meatball after two hours by cutting in half to check for doneness.
- **Plan for longer cooking time.** If this is your first time making slow cooker meatballs, plan for the meatballs to take the full 4 hours cooking time. It is better to start the meatballs early and keep them on the warm setting instead of them not being cooked in time.

PREP Ahead Slow cooker MEATBALLS

- Assemble and bake the meatballs for 8 minutes.
- Let meatballs cool completely.
- Gently layer meatballs in slow cooker in between layer of sauce per recipe directions.
- Remove crockpot ceramic insert with meatballs/sauce and refrigerate, covered.
- Add an additional 30 minutes to cooking time when ready to make OR cook until meatballs are completely cooked through and sauce is hot.

How to FREEZE Slow Cooker MEATBALLS

You can either freeze your Slow Cooker Buffalo Meatballs a) after baking but before cooking in the slow cooker or b) once fully cooked in the sauce.

TO FREEZE SLOW COOKER MEATBALLS AFTER COOKING:

- Let Buffalo Meatballs and Sauce cool completely in the refrigerator before freezing.
- Transfer to an airtight, freezer safe container.
- Freeze for up to 3 months.
- When ready to use, let meatballs thaw overnight in the refrigerator.
- Transfer to a large pot and gently simmer until heated through.

TO FREEZE MEATBALLS BEFORE COOKING:

1. Bake meatballs according to directions.
2. Let meatballs cool to room temperature.
3. Place entire baking tray with the meatballs in the freezer. You will want to make sure the meatballs are not touching so they don't freeze together. If your freezer can't accommodate your baking tray then use a small tray and freeze in batches. Freeze for 1-2 hours.
4. When your meatballs are frozen enough that they won't stick together, then transfer meatballs to freezer safe bags or containers.
5. Label meatballs and store meatballs in the freezer for up to 3 months.
6. You can also make the sauce, store in an airtight container and freeze separately from the meatballs.

HOW TO DEFROST and Cook FROZEN MEATBALLS

When ready to make Buffalo Meatballs, you can cook meatballs either on the stove, crockpot or oven/crockpot:

1. **STOVE:** Add frozen meatballs and sauce to a large pot and simmer for 30 minutes or until cooked through, taking care not to stir the first 10 minutes so you don't break the meatballs.
2. **CROCKPOT:** Add frozen meatballs and sauce to crockpot and cook on low 6-8 hours or until cooked through and hot.
3. **OVEN/CROCKPOT:** Defrost meatballs in the oven by baking at 350 degrees F for 10 to 12 minutes. Meanwhile, defrost sauce in the microwave or stove, stirring often. Transfer meatballs and sauce to crockpot and cook on LOW for 2-4 hours or until completely cooked through.