TURKEY MEATBALLS WITH VEGGIES & QUINOA



Soft Turkey Meatballs • Tender Vegetables • Fluffy Quinoa

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These soft, veggie-packed turkey meatballs are a simple way to serve protein, vegetables, and whole grains in one toddler-friendly meal. Paired with tender carrots, zucchini, and fluffy quinoa, they make a convenient lunch or dinner for little ones.
PREP TIME: 15 minutes
COOK TIME: 20–25 minutes
TOTAL TIME: Approximately 35–40 minutes
SERVINGS: 3–4 toddler portions

YOU'LL NEED

1. FOR THE TURKEY MEATBALLS

- 8 oz (225 g) ground turkey
- 1 small carrot, finely grated
- ½ small zucchini, finely grated and gently squeezed to remove excess moisture
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped onion (optional)
- 1 tablespoon finely ground oats or whole-wheat breadcrumbs
- 1 egg, only if your child already eats egg safely
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- A small pinch of mild dried herbs (optional)

2. FOR SERVING

- ½ cup cooked quinoa
- 1 small carrot
- ½ small zucchini

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO

STEP 1 – PREHEAT THE OVEN

Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C).
Lightly grease a baking sheet or line it with parchment paper.

STEP 2 – PREPARE THE VEGETABLES

Wash the carrot and zucchini thoroughly.
Finely grate the carrot and zucchini for the meatball mixture. Gently squeeze the grated zucchini to remove excess water so the mixture does not become too wet.

STEP 3 – MIX THE MEATBALL INGREDIENTS

In a mixing bowl, combine the ground turkey, grated carrot, grated zucchini, chopped onion, oats or breadcrumbs, egg (if using), olive oil, and mild dried herbs.
Mix gently until everything is evenly combined. Avoid overmixing.

STEP 4 – SHAPE THE MEATBALLS

Using clean hands or a small spoon, form the mixture into small, evenly sized meatballs.
Place them on the prepared baking sheet, leaving a little space between each one.

STEP 5 – BAKE UNTIL FULLY COOKED

Bake for approximately 20-25 minutes, depending on the size of the meatballs.
Check the thickest meatball with a food thermometer. Ground turkey must reach an internal temperature of 165°F (74°C) to be safe to eat.

STEP 6 – COOK THE QUINOA

While the meatballs bake, prepare the quinoa according to the package directions.
Cook until the grains are tender and the liquid has been absorbed.
Allow it to cool slightly before serving.

STEP 7 – STEAM THE VEGETABLES

Peel and cut the remaining carrot and zucchini into small pieces.
Steam until very soft and easy to mash between your fingers. Allow them to cool before serving.

STEP 8 – COOL AND SERVE

Allow the meatballs to cool to a safe eating temperature.
Break the meatballs apart or cut them into small, soft pieces appropriate for your toddler's age and eating ability.
Serve with a spoonful of cooked quinoa and very soft steamed vegetables.

TODDLER SERVING & SAFETY TIPS

- Check the texture: Meatballs and vegetables should be soft and easy to mash.
- Break meatballs apart: Never rely on their small size alone. Cut or break them into age-appropriate pieces.
- Prepare vegetables properly: Cook carrots and zucchini until very soft, not firm or crunchy.
- Supervise every meal: Have your child sit upright and stay within arm's reach while eating.
- Check the temperature: Let food cool sufficiently before serving.
- Introduce ingredients carefully: Only use egg if your child already tolerates it safely. Follow your child's established guidance for introducing new foods.

MAKE-AHEAD & STORAGE

Make ahead: Prepare the meatballs in advance and refrigerate them promptly for another meal.
Refrigerator: Store cooked meatballs and quinoa in separate airtight containers in the refrigerator. Use within 3–4 days.
Freezer: Freeze fully cooked, cooled meatballs in a single layer, then transfer to a freezer-safe container. Use within 2–3 months for best quality.
Reheating: Reheat until steaming hot throughout, then allow to cool to a safe serving temperature. Check the temperature before offering it to your toddler.

A SIMPLE, BALANCED LITTLE MEAL

Serve soft turkey meatballs with fluffy quinoa and tender vegetables for a colorful, comforting meal.
Little bites, wholesome ingredients, and a happy mealtime!