

## **Gluten Free Thursday: Quinoa Balls With Roasted Pepper Sauce**

### **Ingredients:**

Difficulty: Medium

(serves 4-6 people with 24-30 walnut sized balls)

For quinoa balls:

250 gr. raw quinoa, washed well with cold water

4 eggs\*

3 spring onions, sliced thinly

1 small red onion, diced finely

2 green peppers, diced finely

120 gr. cottage cheese

30 gr. cheddar, grated

60 gr. gluten free breadcrumbs

2 tsp ground cumin

1/2 tsp salt (add more if you like it saltier, but remember that cheese etc. will add some salt too)

1/2 tsp freshly ground pepper

4 tbsp olive oil

For roasted pepper sauce:

1 medium size red pepper

1 red hot chili pepper

5 garlic cloves, skin on

40 gr. roasted sliced almonds

4 tomatoes, roughly chopped

2 tsp sherry vinegar\*\*

1 dl olive oil

salt to taste

\*In the photo you only see 2 eggs because that's what I started with. The original recipe called for 2 eggs. However, as I worked on the recipe, I saw that 2 eggs were not enough. In the end I used 4 eggs. You may want to do the same if you like: start with 2 eggs and increase the amount if you do not end up with ingredients which can stick to each other.

\*\*In Helsinki, you can find this in one of the shops in Hakaniemen Kauppahalli. I don't know the name of the shop, if i stop by i will update this info. But it is one of the shops that sell jams, olive oil, vinegar, tea etc, also baklava and some other desserts.

## **Instructions:**

1. Preheat the oven to 190C.
2. First roast the peppers (if you are doing this sauce) because they should cool down before you can peel them. On an oven tray, put a baking paper. Put bell and chili peppers and garlic cloves on the paper.
3. Roast in the oven for about 15-20 minutes, until the chili pepper and garlic cloves get browned. Take those out of the tray and continue roasting bell pepper for 10-15 minutes more, until its skin gets browned here and there. Take out of the oven and let it cool. Do not turn off the oven!
4. Put quinoa in a medium size pan with 2 cups of water and cook until quinoa absorbs most of the water and increases in size, and also gets softer. Drain the excess water when it is cooked. Put aside to cool down.
5. Beat the eggs slightly.
6. In a big bowl, put spring onion, red onion, green pepper and beaten eggs and whisk / mix a little.
7. Add cottage cheese, cheddar, breadcrumbs, cumin, salt and pepper and continue mixing.
8. Add cooked and cooled quinoa and mix well. You may want to do a bit of "kneading" with your hand. Make approximately walnut sized balls from the mixture and put on plates. They are going to be very delicate so I recommend putting them on plates in one layer, no overlapping.
9. In a big pan, put some olive oil. If you are going to cook the balls in several batches, then pour a little bit of olive oil each time, do not pour all 4 tbsp of oil in one go. Cook the balls for just a couple of minutes on heated oil, both sides, only to nicely brown the surface. While you are turning to the other side, use a spatula and be gentle. After cooking, put the balls on an oven tray with baking paper and bake in the oven for 20 minutes.
10. While quinoa balls are baking, go back to your roasted and now cooled peppers. Take the skins off the peppers and garlic cloves.
11. In a food processor, put almonds, roasted peppers, garlicks and tomatoes and process them as much as you can.
12. Add vinegar, olive oil and a pinch of salt and continue processing until you get a sauce consistency. It is nice to make the sauce not too smooth but this is up to you. Taste and add a bit more salt if you like. Serve the balls with sauce and a simple green salad. Enjoy!