

CONVERSATIONS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD: LET'S TALK ABOUT FOOD

CONVERSATIONS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD: *the Past*

Marisella Veiga

Albondigas (Cuban Meatballs) Recipe

This is a modified version of a Chef Nitza Villapol recipe.



(Serves 8)

Ingredients for meatballs

- 1.5 lbs ground beef
- 2 tsp minced onion
- 2 tsp minced green pepper
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 cup breadcrumbs, unseasoned
- 1 tsp mustard
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp pepper

Ingredients for Sofrito

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 medium Spanish onion
- 1 green bell pepper
- 1 small can tomato sauce
- 1/3 cup ketchup
- 1 tsp Salt
- 1 tsp White sugar
- 1/2 cup dry wine

Directions

1. Combine all meatball ingredients in a bowl and shape into balls. Coat with flour and brown in neutral vegetable oil.
2. Make a sofrito with olive oil, garlic, onion, and green pepper in a pot or large skillet. Add the rest of the ingredients, cover and cook on low heat for 30 minutes. Also tastes great with ground turkey.

Where did Marisella get her recipe inspiration from?

I learned so much about particular Cuban dishes from Nitza Villapol that I decided to include one of her recipes from a cookbook popular in Cuba before the 1959 revolution. The late Nitza Villapol was the Julia Child of Cuban cooking and had a television show too. Her cookbook, *Cocina Criolla*, was prized. Many exiles brought it along in order to maintain traditional meals in their new U.S. homes. The book was reprinted and distributed outside of Cuba without her consent.

You can always adapt the recipe!

I've made small modifications: in the first part of the recipe, Nitza wanted the onion and green pepper grounded. She preferred ground crackers to ground breadcrumbs, but the breadcrumbs are easier to source in some areas than Cuban crackers.

Watch Marisella's cooking demonstration with [Weave Tales](#) here:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fc0uIRRB9Co>