



INDONESIAN

Bakso (Beef Meatball Soup)

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Involved	6	40 min	40 min	Simmer	Ground beef

Ingredients

MEATBALLS

- 600 g (1½ lb) lean ground beef, very cold
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 shallots, minced
- 3 tbsp tapioca starch (or cornstarch)
- 1½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp sugar
- ½ tsp white pepper
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 60 g (½ cup) crushed ice or 4 tbsp ice water

BROTH

- 2 litres (8 cups) beef stock

BROTH (CONT.)

- 3 cloves garlic, smashed
- 1 tsp white pepper
- 2 tsp salt, to taste
- 1 tbsp fried shallots

TO SERVE

- 200 g (7 oz) rice noodles or egg noodles, cooked
- Bok choy or choy sum, blanched
- Fried shallots, sliced celery leaves
- Sambal, sweet soy sauce (kecap manis, or soy sauce with a pinch of brown sugar), lime wedges

Steps

1. Put the beef, garlic, shallots, starch, salt, sugar, pepper and baking powder in a food processor.
2. Pulse for 30 seconds, then add the ice a little at a time while processing for 1 to 2 minutes, until the mixture is a smooth, tacky paste. Cold meat gives bouncy meatballs.
3. Bring a wide pot of water to a gentle simmer, with small bubbles only. A hard boil would break the meatballs.
4. Wet one hand and squeeze a handful of paste up through your fist, so a ball pops out between thumb and finger. Scoop it with a wet spoon and drop it into the water. Repeat to make about 30.
5. Simmer for 10 to 12 minutes until the meatballs float and feel firm and springy. They should reach 71°C (160°F). Lift out into cold water for 1 minute.
6. In another pot, bring the stock to a simmer with the smashed garlic, pepper and salt for 10 minutes until fragrant.
7. Add the meatballs to the broth and warm them through for 5 minutes.
8. Divide noodles and greens among bowls, add 5 meatballs each, ladle on hot broth, and top with fried shallots. Serve with sambal, kecap manis and lime.

Notes

- **Make ahead:** cooked meatballs keep 3 days in the fridge and freeze for 2 months.
- **Texture:** do not skip the food processor; a coarse mix will be crumbly.
- **Other cuts:** use ground round for a leaner, firmer bite.

- **Chef's touch:** season the broth until it tastes slightly too salty on its own, because the noodles and meatballs will soften it.