



## Meatless Meatballs - *Pair with PMV 2018 Grenache*

1 large eggplant  
1 ounce dried porcini mushrooms  
Boiling water  
¼ cup olive oil  
1 small onion  
4 garlic cloves  
2 x 28 ounce tomato whole Italian cans pureed with juices  
2 tblspn chopped basil + extra for garnish  
Salt + pepper  
3 cups bread crumbs  
2 large eggs beaten  
2 ounces pecorino romano cheese finely grated  
1 tblspn chopped parsley  
Flour for coating  
Vegetable oil for frying

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Prick eggplant all over with a fork and set on baking sheet. Roast in the center of the oven until very soft about an hour. Let cool slightly, scrape eggplant flesh into a large bowl and let cool completely. Drain and excess liquid away
2. In a heatproof bowl cover the dried porcini with 1 ½ cups of boiling water and let stand until soft, about 30 minutes, drain reserving the soaking liquid. Rinse porcini's to remove any grit and finely chop.
3. In a heavy cast-iron pot, heat olive oil until simmering. Add the onion, half of the garlic over medium heat, stirring until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the can tomato puree and add porcini liquid, stop before reaching grit at the bottom. Simmer over moderately low heat, stirring until thick, about an hour. Add ½ chopped basil and season with salt and pepper.
4. Fold in chopped porcini's, bread crumbs, eggs, 2 ounces of grated cheese, parsley and remaining garlic and chopped basil into eggplant. Season with salt + pepper
5. Line baking sheet with wax paper. Form eggplant mixture into 20 x 1 ¾ inch balls, pressing and rolling tightly. Dust balls with flour and refrigerate for 20 minutes.
6. In large no stick skillet. Heat ½ inch of vegetable oil. Add half the meatballs at a time and cook over moderate high heat., turning occasionally until browned all over. Drain on paper towels and add to tomato sauce. Simmer for 5 minutes. Garnish with basil and grated parmesan.

