

04/11/11 - Passover Vegetarian Kuftes

A wonderful vegetarian side dish, Kufte de Prassa without meat uses mashed potatoes to bind the leeks together in a patty rather than ground beef. My Nona used to make these and my mother, we call her Nona now, always talks about this dish with very fond memories. I think for immigrants on a very tight budget something made without meat was delicious and ingenious.



It always amazes what alchemy our Nona's performed with a little bit of this and that, with ingredients brought home often by husbands who had no clue about 'cooking' only eating and only with the thought of how much money it all cost and how many mouths there were to feed. In 1910-and after Nona did not drive. Nona transformed boxes of farm market vegetables when Pikes Place was in its infancy into delights for the palate with technique more than anything else.

So this year as Pesach approaches, try this dish, a wonderful little mouthful, squeeze fresh lemon and put a little salt on it before you pop it in your mouth and while you savor the kufte think about how the cuisine evolved, while remaining essentially intact when our Nonas and Papus emigrated and were confronted with new circumstances. Think about how Am Israoel was confronted with new circumstances when they left Egypt and slavery behind.

For around 25 kufte:



4 large leeks

Water

2 large potatoes

½ cup chopped fresh parsley

½ cup matzo meal

1 egg beaten

Salt and pepper

Matzo cake flour

4 eggs

Cut the ends off the leeks, slit them lengthwise and wash out each layer, taking care not to take the whole thing apart. Slice off any tough layers of outer layer dark green leaves. Dry the leeks and mince them with a sharp knife. Place the leeks in a sauce pan with a tight fitting lid and cover with cold water. Bring the leeks to a boil

and let them cook for two minutes. Turn off the heat and let the leeks cool in the water. Drain the leeks and then squeeze out any water left in the leek with your hands. Set the leeks aside in a bowl, you may do this a couple days before as you wish and keep refrigerated.

Peel the potatoes, wash, and slice them into ¼ inch thick slices. Place the potatoes in a sauce pan, cover them with cold water, and bring to a boil until they are soft



Combine the potatoes with the cooked leeks. Add the matzo meal, 1 beaten egg, parsley, salt and pepper. Combine the mixture well with your hands. Refrigerate the mix for several hours to allow it become a little stiff. Make the leek and potato mix into patties about 1-2 inches in circumference. Next roll each patty in a bit of matzo cake meal. Beat the remaining 4 eggs in a shallow bowl. Preheat a sauté pan. When it is medium hot, add vegetable oil, Safflower is kosher for Passover.



Dip each patty in beaten egg and slip into the hot oil. Fry until golden light brown,



Remove patties from the oil and drain on paper towel. Serve them hot with lemon wedges and salt. This makes a gret side dish on a Passover table or you can use



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