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Description

Meatloaf muffins are a fun, convenient twist on classic homemade meatloaf. Baked in a muffin tin, these individual portions develop deliciously browned edges while staying tender and juicy inside. Made with ground meat, seasonings, and a savory topping, they're easy to prepare for busy weeknights, meal prep, or a satisfying family dinner.

This versatile recipe can fit into a high-protein eating routine, and it can be made lower in carbohydrates by choosing suitable ingredients and a low-sugar topping. Serve these mini meatloaves with roasted vegetables, cauliflower mash, or a fresh salad for a balanced meal.

Can These Meatloaf Muffins Support Weight Loss Goals?

Meatloaf muffins can be a practical option for people working toward weight-management goals because individual portions make serving sizes easier to manage. Ground meat

provides protein, which helps make meals satisfying, while adding vegetables can contribute fiber and volume.

For a lighter version, choose lean ground meat, avoid excessive added oil, and use a modest amount of glaze. Overall calorie intake and the foods served alongside the muffins matter more than any single recipe.

Do Meatloaf Muffins Fit a High-Protein Lifestyle?

Yes, meatloaf muffins can be an excellent source of protein because ground beef, turkey, or chicken provides the main protein component. Eggs may help bind the mixture, while seasonings, onion, and garlic add flavor.

To reduce carbohydrates, use a small amount of breadcrumbs or a suitable alternative and choose a glaze without added sugar. The exact protein and net carbohydrate content will depend on the meat, binder, topping, and serving size.

My Personal Experience

- Convenient individual portions: Baking meatloaf in a muffin tin creates ready-to-serve portions that are easy to divide for lunch or dinner.
- Flavorful browned edges: The smaller shape gives each muffin plenty of surface area for delicious browning while helping the inside remain tender.
- Great for meal prep: These muffins can be prepared ahead and reheated for quick meals throughout the week.
- Easy to customize: Different herbs, spices, ground meats, and toppings make it simple to adapt the flavor to your preferences.

Perfect For

- High-protein meals
- Low-carb recipe collections
- Easy family dinners
- Weekly meal prep
- Portion-conscious lunches
- Keto-inspired meal plans, with suitable ingredient substitutions
- Quick lunches and leftovers

- Comfort-food dinners with vegetables

Why You'll Love This Recipe

- Classic meatloaf flavor: Savory seasonings, onion, and garlic bring familiar homemade flavor to every bite.
- Simple portion control: The muffin-tin format creates individual servings without needing to slice a large loaf.
- Protein-rich ingredients: Ground meat provides substantial protein to help make the meal satisfying.
- Weeknight-friendly preparation: Mix the ingredients, divide into muffin cups, and let the oven do most of the work.
- Flexible ingredients: Beef, turkey, or chicken can be used depending on your preferred flavor and fat content.
- Meal-prep friendly: The muffins store and reheat well when handled and refrigerated properly.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

1. Overmixing the meat: Mixing too aggressively can make the muffins dense and tough. Combine the ingredients just until evenly distributed.
2. Using too much binder: Excessive breadcrumbs or other fillers can make the texture heavy. Measure carefully and adjust moisture gradually.
3. Overbaking: Lean meat can dry out if cooked too long. Check the internal temperature with a food thermometer.
4. Filling the muffin cups too high: Leave a little room for the mixture to cook evenly and release some fat.
5. Removing them immediately: Let the muffins rest briefly after baking so they hold together more easily.
6. Relying only on appearance: Browning edges do not guarantee the center is safely cooked. Ground beef, pork, lamb, or veal should reach 160°F (71°C); ground poultry should reach 165°F (74°C).

Required Equipment

- Muffin tin: Shapes the mixture into individual portions and creates browned edges.
- Large mixing bowl: Provides enough space to combine the meat and seasonings evenly.
- Measuring cups and spoons: Help maintain consistent seasoning and binder amounts.

- Mixing spoon or clean hands: Makes it easy to combine the ingredients without overmixing.
- Food thermometer: Checks that the center reaches a safe temperature.
- Small spoon or pastry brush: Spreads the glaze evenly over each muffin.

Storage Instructions

- Refrigerator: Store cooked muffins in an airtight container for up to 3–4 days at 40°F (4°C) or below.
- Freezer: Freeze fully cooled muffins in a freezer-safe container for about 2–3 months for best quality.
- Reheating: Reheat leftovers to 165°F (74°C). Add a little extra glaze or cover loosely to help prevent drying.
- Cooling safely: Refrigerate within 2 hours of cooking, or within 1 hour if the temperature is above 90°F (32°C).
- Meal prep: Divide into individual containers with vegetables or another preferred side for convenient meals.

Recipe Details

- Prep time: 15 minutes
- Cook time: 20–25 minutes
- Total time: Approximately 40 minutes
- Yield: 12 muffins
- Difficulty: Easy
- Best for: Lunch, dinner, and meal prep
- Dietary style: High-protein; can be made low-carb with ingredient adjustments

Short Recipe Description

Tender, savory meatloaf muffins made with seasoned ground meat and a flavorful glaze. These mini meatloaves are easy to prepare, simple to portion, and ideal for busy weeknights or make-ahead meals.

Ingredients

- 1½ pounds (680 g) lean ground beef or ground turkey
- ½ cup finely diced onion

- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large egg
- ½ cup plain breadcrumbs
- 2 tablespoons milk or unsweetened milk alternative
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon dried Italian herbs

For the glaze

- ¼ cup ketchup
- 1 teaspoon mustard
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

For a lower-carb version, use a suitable low-carb binder and a reduced-sugar ketchup. Nutrition values will change with substitutions.

Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Preheat the oven: Heat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Lightly grease a standard 12-cup muffin tin.
2. Prepare the binder: In a large bowl, combine the egg, milk, Worcestershire sauce, salt, pepper, paprika, and dried herbs.
3. Add the meat: Mix in the ground meat, diced onion, garlic, and breadcrumbs. Combine gently until the ingredients are evenly distributed.
4. Fill the muffin tin: Divide the mixture among the 12 muffin cups, filling each evenly without packing the meat too tightly.
5. Make the glaze: Stir together the ketchup, mustard, and Worcestershire sauce in a small bowl.
6. Add the topping: Spoon a little glaze over each muffin.
7. Bake: Bake for approximately 20–25 minutes, checking doneness with a food thermometer. Ground beef should reach 160°F (71°C); ground turkey or chicken should reach 165°F (74°C).
8. Rest and serve: Let the muffins rest for 5 minutes before carefully removing them from the tin. Serve warm with vegetables or your favorite side.

Approximate Nutrition Information

Estimated per muffin, assuming 12 muffins made with lean ground beef and the listed ingredients.

Nutrient	Approximate amount
Calories	165-190
Total fat	8-11 g
Saturated fat	3-4 g
Cholesterol	55-70 mg
Sodium	250-380 mg
Potassium	250-330 mg
Total carbohydrates	6-8 g
Fiber	0.3-0.7 g
Net carbohydrates	5.5-7.5 g
Sugars	2-4 g
Protein	15-18 g
Calcium	20-40 mg

These values are estimates, not laboratory results. Actual nutrition depends on the meat's fat percentage, brand of breadcrumbs, ketchup, portion size, and any substitutions.

Helpful Notes

- Finely dice the onion so it softens during baking and distributes evenly.
- For a softer texture, avoid compressing the mixture tightly into the muffin cups.
- Ground turkey and chicken are lean alternatives, but they can dry out more quickly if overcooked.
- If the meat mixture seems unusually wet, allow it to rest for a few minutes before filling the tin.
- For a lower-carb meal, serve with roasted broccoli, green beans, or cauliflower mash.
- If using a low-carb binder or sugar-free glaze, check the product labels because

ingredients and nutrition vary by brand.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why are my meatloaf muffins falling apart?

They may need a little more binder, such as egg or breadcrumbs, or a short resting period after baking. Avoid removing them from the tin immediately.

2. Can I make meatloaf muffins ahead of time?

Yes. Mix the ingredients and refrigerate the uncooked mixture in a covered container for up to one day, then shape and bake. Alternatively, cook the muffins ahead and refrigerate them promptly.

3. Can I use ground turkey instead of beef?

Yes. Ground turkey works well and often produces a leaner muffin. Cook it to an internal temperature of 165°F (74°C).

4. How do I make meatloaf muffins low-carb?

Reduce or replace the breadcrumbs with a suitable low-carb binder, and use a low-sugar or sugar-free ketchup. Check the ingredient labels to calculate the actual net carbs.

5. Can meatloaf muffins be frozen?

Yes. Cool them, package them in an airtight freezer-safe container, and freeze for about 2-3 months for best quality. Thaw in the refrigerator before reheating, or reheat safely from frozen.

6. How can I tell when the muffins are done?

Use a food thermometer in the center of a muffin. Ground beef should reach 160°F (71°C), while ground poultry should reach 165°F (74°C). Avoid relying on color alone.