

ELIZABETHST

Where Stylish Moms Meet

Remembering Mom: Melissa d'Arabian

by Melissa d'Arabian
May 8, 2013

We speak with the host of 'Ten Dollar Dinners' about the tribute she pays to her mother each year.



Melissa d'Arabian is the host of the Food Network's *Ten Dollar Dinners* and the Cooking Channel's *Drop 5 Lbs with Good Housekeeping*. She's also the author of the *New York Times* best-selling cookbook *Ten Dollar Dinners*, a wife, and a mom to four little girls.

Talented and charming, the wildly successful chef is an inspiration for those who have experienced heartbreak—d'Arabian's mom died by suicide when she was only 20 years old. Since then, Melissa has made suicide awareness her mission: The chef even competed

on the show *Chopped* (against other Food Network stars) to raise money for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. We're so grateful to Melissa for sharing with us a little bit about her mother in honor of Mother's Day, as well as one of the best meatball recipes, inspired by a dish her mother used to make.—*Elizabeth Street*

Twenty-four years ago, my mom died by suicide. Over the years, I have certainly missed her presence at the big things: graduations, birthdays, the holidays, my wedding, and the birth of each of my babies. But I also miss the little stuff that slips out of my mind as my brain fills itself with life and its obligations. It's those details that pop into my mind unexpectedly, and put a smile on my face or a tear in my heart, even now, so many years later: The smell of White Linen perfume, her loyalty to L'Oreal lipstick in a la Mauve, or her quirky refusal to buy paper towels (books were the only reason good enough to justify cutting down trees). She would make me homemade strawberry jam tacos when I was five because I didn't like meat (which equipped me well for dealing with my twins' food tastes), and she taught me the joy of welcoming people into our home for a meal. She even let me host a big dinner on prom night—I made pan-seared chicken.

I recently turned 44, which is older than my mom ever was. And I'm raising four daughters of my own: Young women whose individual journeys I am honored to share. But becoming a mom doesn't erase the pain of losing my own. When I think about how mom would have loved being part of the beautiful family Philippe and I have created, I still feel regret, sadness, and loss in my gut. But my four little treasures, my life, and my motherin bring me enough joy to hush the sorrow, and to put the sweet in bittersweet. In celebration of mom, here are my recipes for meatballs, inspired by my mom's "famous" flank steak.



By Melissa d'Arabian (@melissadarabian)

Lemon-Thyme Meatballs

Reprinted from the book *Ten Dollar Dinners*.

When I was a kid my mom used to make a marinated flank steak dinner for special occasions. I borrowed the flavors of that dinner—lemon, thyme, scallions, and soy sauce—and put them into an everyday package: 30-minute meatballs. These deeply flavored meatballs are as delicious with a loaded baked potato as they are sandwiched into a baguette.

Makes 24 meatballs

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 20 minutes

1 large egg
2 scallions (green parts only), finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely minced or pressed through a garlic press
Zest and juice of 1/2 lemon
1/4 c. soy sauce
2 tsp. dried thyme
1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
2/3 c. bread crumbs
1 lb. 80% lean ground beef

1. Heat oven to 375°F. Lightly coat a rimmed baking sheet with nonstick pan spray and set aside.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the egg, scallions, garlic, lemon zest and juice, soy sauce, thyme, and pepper. Stir in the breadcrumbs, then add the ground beef, breaking it up into small knobs as you add it to the bowl.
3. Use a spoon or your hands to gently mix together, and then form the mixture into twenty-four 1-inch balls. Place the balls on the prepared baking sheet and bake until they are browned and slightly resistant to pressure when pressed, about 20 minutes. Serve hot.

For more of Melissa's recipes including her [Mom's Banana Bread with Chocolate Chips](#), visit <http://www.melissadarabian.net>. You can also find her on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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