Italian Wedding Soup

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

Meatballs:

- 1 **pound Neese's Country Sausage**
- ½ **cup breadcrumbs**
- ¼ **cup parsley, minced**
- 1½ **teaspoons oregano, minced**
- ½ **grated Parmesan, plus more for serving**
- 1 **large egg**
- 1 **teaspoon salt**
- ½ **teaspoon ground black pepper**
- 2 **tablespoons clarified butter, divided**

Soup:

- 1 **tablespoon olive oil**
- 1¼ **cups carrots, diced**
- 1 **cup yellow onion, diced**
- 1 **fennel bulb, diced**
- 3 **cloves garlic, minced**
- 4 **quarts chicken stock**
- **Salt and ground black pepper to taste**
- 1 **cup Israeli couscous, cooked**
- ½ **pound Tuscan (lacinato) kale, ribbed and chiffonade**

For the meatballs: Combine sausage, breadcrumbs, parsley, oregano, Parmesan, egg, salt, and pepper in a large bowl and mix well.

Form the mixture into ¾- to 1-inch meatballs and place them on a sheet pan.

Heat 1 tablespoon of clarified butter in a large cast-iron or other non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Add half of the meatballs and cook, turning occasionally, until browned on 2 or 3 sides, about 4 minutes total.

Transfer meatballs to a paper towel-lined plate. Add remaining butter to skillet and repeat process with remaining meatballs. ***Note:*** *Meatballs won't be fully cooked at this point; they'll finish cooking in the soup.*

For the soup: Heat the olive oil in a large soup pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add carrots, onion, and fennel and sauté until veggies have softened, about 6 to 8 minutes. Add garlic and sauté 1 minute longer.

Pour in chicken stock. Season soup with salt and pepper to taste and bring mixture to a boil. Add meatballs and reduce heat to light boil (about medium or medium-low).

Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the meatballs have cooked through, about 9 minutes. Add couscous and kale and cook for 1 minute longer. Serve warm and sprinkle each serving with Parmesan cheese.

ORIGINAL RECIPE BY ALYSSA WILEN / PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEREMIAH MCLAMB