



Menu du Jour

12 Feb 06

Lasagna
(Serves six)

Lasagna

Lasagna, smothered with a flavorful meat sauce, layered with ricotta cheese, and capped with shredded mozzarella... what could be better? Serve it with some crusty Italian garlic bread and a tossed salad for a great meal. Although "no boil" pasta could be used, the traditional pasta makes a better dish. Lasagna also freezes well and may be stored frozen for up to 2 months.

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium yellow onion, peeled and diced
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 1/2 pounds ground beef
1/2 pound button mushrooms, sliced
1 green bell pepper, seeded and diced
1 (28-ounce) can tomato purée
1 (15 1/2-ounce) can tomato soup
1 cup whole milk
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon dried oregano
Coarse kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
1 (8-ounce) package lasagna pasta
1 (32-ounce) container ricotta cheese
1 egg, lightly beaten
1/2 cup freshly chopped flat leaf parsley
2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
Chopped flat leaf parsley, for garnish
1/2 cup freshly grated Pecorino Romano cheese, for garnish

Prepare the sauce:

In a medium stockpot, heat the oil over medium heat and cook the onions and garlic until the onions begin to soften. Add the ground beef and cook until the beef is thoroughly browned. Add the bell pepper and mushrooms. Cook, stirring often, for 5 minutes. Add the tomato purée, tomato soup, and milk. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season with basil, oregano, salt, and pepper; add crushed red pepper flakes, if desired.



Meanwhile, prepare the lasagna according to package instructions and drain the pasta on a clean chef's towel.

In a mixing bowl, combine the ricotta, egg, and chopped parsley. Stir well to incorporate.

Ladle about 3/4 cup of the sauce on the bottom of a 9- by 13-inch lasagna pan. Place a single layer of the pasta atop the sauce. Spread about 2/3 cup of the ricotta mixture over the pasta. Repeat layering two more times and cover final layer of pasta with meat sauce. Sprinkle the mozzarella over the sauce and cover with aluminum foil. (Lasagna could be prepared to this point, covered with food film and aluminum foil and frozen for up to 2 months. To cook, remove food film, cover with aluminum foil and bake for 1 1/2 hours at 375 degrees F.)

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

Place the lasagna pan on a sheet pan and bake for 30 minutes. Remove aluminum foil and bake for another 15 minutes. Allow the lasagna to stand for 5 minutes before cutting. Garnish with freshly chopped flat leaf parsley and freshly grated Pecorino Romano cheese.

Cooking & Presentation



Lasagna Hot From The Oven



Lasagna, Tossed Salad, & Garlic Bread