



JERNEJ KITCHEN

SPINACH AND RICOTTA PASTA BAKE

Spinach and Ricotta Pasta Bake is a delicious, easy, and quick midweek dinner recipe. Creamy pasta with a golden-brown, crispy, cheesy top.

SERVES	4	PEOPLE
PREPARATION:	10	MINUTES
COOK:	20	MINUTES
BAKE:	25	MINUTES
TOTAL TIME:	55	MINUTES

PASTA WITH TOMATO SAUCE

- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 3 cloves of garlic
- 2 roasted red bell peppers from a jar
- 4 sun-dried tomatoes
- 1 tsp oregano
- 410 g (14.5 oz) canned diced tomatoes
- 200 g (7 oz) canned tomato puree
- 320 g (11.3 oz) optional dried pasta (like penne)
- 1 tbsp chopped parsley

SPINACH FILLING

- 60 g (2.2 oz) fresh spinach
- 150 g (5.3 oz) ricotta cheese
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg

TOPPING

- 3 tbsp parmesan cheese, grated
- 2 tbsp breadcrumbs
- 125 g (4.5 oz) mozzarella cheese

TOMATO SAUCE

First, prepare the tomato sauce. Place a large skillet with olive oil over medium heat. Add chopped garlic, chopped roasted red peppers, chopped sun-dried tomatoes, and oregano. Cook for 3 - 4 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add canned diced tomatoes and tomato puree. Season with salt and pepper, stir and simmer for 15 minutes or until the sauce is nice and thick. Before removing from the heat, stir in the chopped parsley.

COOK THE PASTA

While the tomato sauce is cooking, cook the pasta according to instructions on the package. Don't overcook the pasta, remove it from the heat when it's cooked al dente. Drain the pasta and reserve 120 ml (1/2 cup) of the cooking water. Preheat the oven to 200 °C / 390 °F.

SPINACH FILLING AND TOPPING

In a food processor (or using an immersion blender), mix spinach, ricotta cheese, olive oil, and nutmeg until well combined and thick. Season with salt and pepper. In a separate bowl, stir to combine grated parmesan (or other hard cheese) and breadcrumbs.

TIP

If you don't have a food processor or an immersion blender, don't worry. Finely chop the spinach using a sharp kitchen knife and stir to combine all the ingredients in a bowl.

SPINACH AND RICOTTA PASTA BAKE - LAYERING

Combine drained cooked pasta and the reserved cooking water with the homemade tomato sauce. Arrange half of the

TOOLS AND EQUIPEMENT

skillet

pasta pot

food processor or immersion
blender

deep baking dish (20 cm x 25
cm or 8-inch x 10-inch)

combined pasta with the tomato sauce to a deep baking dish (approx. 20 cm x 25 cm or 8-inch x 10-inch). Spread the spinach filling on top, then arrange the rest of the combined pasta with the tomato sauce on top. Sprinkle with shredded mozzarella cheese and parmesan and breadcrumbs mixture.

BAKE AND SERVE

Place the baking dish with the pasta in the preheated oven on the middle rack. Bake for 25 minutes at 200 °C / 390 °F, or until the pasta bake is golden-brown and crispy on top. Divide the Spinach and Ricotta Pasta Bake between four plates. Optionally sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve.