



Ultimate Hearty Beef Lasagna

Servings: 10

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Start to Finish Time: 2 hours 55 minutes

This recipe has earned its 5-star rating by efficiently saving time and effort without compromising on taste.

LASAGNA:

Pam cooking spray

17 noodles lasagna noodles, curly-edged

12 ounces mozzarella cheese, shredded

1 tablespoon salt

MEAT SAUCE:

2 slices white sandwich bread, hearty, torn into small pieces

1/4 cup milk

1 1/2 pounds ground beef, 90% lean meat

3/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon pepper

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 each onion, finely chopped

6 cloves garlic, minced

1 teaspoon dried oregano

1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes

1 28-oz can crushed tomatoes

CREAM SAUCE:

8 ounces cottage cheese

2 cups Pecorino Romano Cheese, grated

1 cup heavy cream

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 teaspoon corn starch

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon pepper

WHAT MAKES THIS RECIPE SUCCESSFUL: Traditional meat lasagna recipes often require an entire day to prepare. However, we've simplified the process by creating a speedy, no-cook cheesy filling and reducing the time needed for meat sauce preparation. By letting the sauce cook in the oven as the lasagna bakes, we've eliminated the typically lengthy stovetop simmer. We also fine-tuned the ingredient ratios until we achieved a lasagna with a distinctively meaty flavor profile, moving away from the typical dominance of tomatoes and cheese.

TIP: We created this recipe with the use of dried curly-edged lasagna noodles, so please avoid using no-boil noodles. You'll find approximately 20 individual noodles in a 1-pound box of lasagna noodles, which is a good amount for this dish.

TIP: ASSEMBLY: If your lasagne pan holds 4-across, instead of 3-across, eliminate 1 layer.

FOR THE LASAGNA (25 minutes):

Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 375° F

Spray rimmed baking sheet and 13 by 9-inch baking dish with oil spray.

Bring 4 quarts water to boil in large Dutch oven.

Add noodles and salt and cook, stirring often, until al dente.

Drain noodles and transfer them to prepared sheet. Using tongs, gently turn noodles to coat lightly with oil spray. Cut 2 noodles in half crosswise (if the noodles are not long enough to fit baking pan).

FOR THE MEAT SAUCE (20 minutes):

Mash bread and milk in bowl until smooth. Add beef, salt, and pepper and knead with your hands until well combined; set aside.

Heat oil in now-empty Dutch oven over medium heat until shimmering. Add onion and cook until softened, about 5 minutes.

Stir in garlic, oregano, and pepper flakes and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute.

Add beef mixture, breaking meat into small pieces with wooden spoon, and cook until no longer pink, about 4 minutes.

Stir in tomatoes and bring to simmer, scraping up any browned bits. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until flavors have melded, about 5 minutes.

FOR THE CREAM SAUCE (5 minutes):

Whisk all ingredients in bowl until combined.

ASSEMBLE (15 minutes):

Lay 3 noodles lengthwise in prepared dish with ends touching 1 short side of dish, leaving gap at far end. Lay 1 half noodle crosswise to fill gap (if needed).

Spread 1 1/2 cups meat sauce over noodles, followed by 1/2 cup cream sauce and finally 1/2 cup mozzarella.

Repeat layering of noodles, meat sauce, cream sauce, and mozzarella 3 more times, switching position of half noodle to opposite end of dish each time.

Lay remaining 3 noodles over top (there is no half noodle for top layer). Spread remaining cream sauce over noodles, followed by remaining 1 cup mozzarella. Sprinkle Pecorino over top.

BAKE (1 hour, 30 minutes):

Spray sheet of aluminum foil with oil spray and cover lasagna. Set lasagna on rimmed baking sheet. Bake for 30 minutes.

Discard foil and continue to bake until top layer of lasagna is spotty brown, 25 to 30 minutes longer.

Let lasagna cool for 30 minutes.

Slice and serve.



MAKE AHEAD: After ASSEMBLY, cover dish with greased aluminum foil and refrigerate for up to 24 hours. When ready to eat, bake lasagna as directed, increasing covered baking time to 55 minutes.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 1139 Calories; 41g Fat (32.9% calories from fat); 62g Protein; 128g Carbohydrate; 7g Dietary Fiber; 144mg Cholesterol; 1719mg Sodium; 10g Total Sugars; 1mcg Vitamin D; 895mg Calcium; 8mg Iron; 913mg Potassium; 625mg Phosphorus.