



## ITALIAN SAUSAGE LASAGNA

Prep: 30 min, Cook: 1:30, plus cooling time.

- 1 lb. sweet or hot Italian sausage, casings removed
- 2 tsp. olive oil
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and thinly sliced
- 1 green bell pepper, seeded and thinly sliced
- 1 large yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled
- 3-1/3 cups canned tomatoes, undrained
- 2 tsp. fennel seeds
- 1 Tbs. unsalted butter, melted
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- 10 ounces frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed to drain all liquid
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 3 cups part-skim ricotta cheese
- 2 ounces mozzarella cheese, shredded
- 9 lasagna noodles

Crumble and sauté sausage in a heavy nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until well browned. Drain off fat. Set sausage aside. Wipe skillet clean. Add oil and heat over medium-high heat. Add sliced peppers, sliced onion, and 2 cloves garlic. Cover and **cook** about 10 minutes over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are soft. Stir in tomatoes and fennel seed. Reduce heat to low and **simmer** 20-30 minutes. Stir in reserved sausage. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Set sauce aside.

Melt butter in a separate heavy nonstick skillet over medium heat. **Sauté** chopped onion and 2 cloves garlic about 10 minutes, until soft. Stir in spinach and 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese. Set aside.

Combine ricotta, mozzarella and 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Boil noodles according to package directions and drain.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Pour 1/3 of the tomato sauce into a lightly oiled 9x13 inch baking dish. Spread evenly. Arrange 3 noodles in the dish and spread half the spinach mixture over the noodles. Spread half the cheese mixture evenly over the spinach. Repeat this layering process once more. Top with remaining 3 noodles and tomato sauce. Sprinkle with remaining 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese. **Bake** about 1 hour, until bubbly and browned on top. **Cool** 10-15 minutes before serving.

If freezing cooked food, divide into freezer/oven-proof containers in the amounts you will use at one time. Cool as quickly as possible to retain freshness. (Dairy, egg and meat based dishes should cool in refrigerator.) Cover tightly and place in freezer for up to 3 months. Reheating options: Place frozen food in oven and turn on heat to 375°F.

**Bake** about 1 hour, or until bubbly. Or, transfer food to a covered microwave-safe container and heat on high setting until bubbly. (USDA recommends reheating meats to 165°F to destroy any bacteria.)

This recipe serves 10 people. Due to the nature of this recipe, it adjusts the number of servings in multiples of 10 only. **The recommended wine is: Burgundy.**



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