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ZUCCHINI LASAGNA

CONVECTION BAKE

Whether you are eating a low-carb diet or have a glut of zucchini, this recipe using zucchini slices instead of noodles is definitely worth a try. The preparation is simplified because you can “pre-cook” the zucchini slices at the same time on multiple trays using Convection; that way they won’t give off as much water and they will be more flavorful.

Prepare a simple meat sauce, assemble your cheeses and some fresh herbs and your delicious lasagna will come together in no time. The lasagna can also be prepared without meat substituting sautéed vegetables such as mushrooms, peppers or eggplant for the meat layer. Overall preparation time is about 40 minutes and the baking time for the lasagna is also approximately 40 minutes.

Ingredients

3 large zucchini, end trimmed, cut lengthwise into ¼” thick slices

½ tsp dried oregano

4 tbsp olive oil

2 lbs ground beef

1 small yellow onion, chopped

3 cloves garlic, minced

½ tsp mixed Italian seasoning



1 24oz jar pasta sauce

Pinch dried red chili flakes

1 15oz container ricotta cheese

1 ½ cups shredded mozzarella or 4 cheese blend

1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

1 egg

¼ cup chopped fresh basil and oregano leaves

¼ cup pesto sauce

Directions

You will need a 1 9x13” oven casserole dish.

Heat the oven in the Convection or Convection Bake mode at 400 degrees.

Arrange the zucchini onto 2 lightly oiled rimmed baking sheets, sprinkle the zucchini with a little kosher salt, cracked pepper, oregano and drizzle or spray a little more olive oil on the top. Slide the trays into the oven and bake for 15 - 20 minutes until

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beginning to brown at the edges. Remove and set aside.

Meanwhile, heat a large heavy pan over medium heat, add a light film of oil to the pan, increase the heat to medium high and add the ground beef. Sear the meat, breaking it up with the back of a spoon until evenly browned. This can be done in batches if necessary. Remove the pan from the heat and transfer the meat to a bowl with a slotted spoon.

Place the pan back on the stove and heat over medium heat. Add the remainder of the olive oil and saute the onion until softened. Stir in the garlic and seasoning and cook for a minute or two. Now add in the pasta sauce, reserving $\frac{1}{2}$ a cup to spread on the bottom of the baking dish and the cooked beef and a sprinkle of dried red chili flakes. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook for 15 to 20 minutes.

While the meat sauce is cooking, combine the ricotta cheese with the shredded Parmesan cheese and egg, stir in the fresh herbs and add a grind or two of freshly cracked pepper.

Arrange the oven racks so one is in the lower third of the oven and change the oven heating mode to Convection Bake 350 degrees. In this mode heat will be directed to the top and bottom of the casserole and the Convection fan will circulate the heat around the oven.

Spread the reserved $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pasta sauce on the bottom of the casserole dish and arrange a layer of zucchini slices across the bottom of the pan. Top with half of the meat sauce and spread half of the ricotta mixture over that, finishing with a sprinkle of $\frac{1}{2}$ a cup of the shredded mozzarella.

Repeat the layers, finishing with a final layer of zucchini slices, spread the pesto over the zucchini and the final $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of shredded mozzarella. Place the lasagna in the oven and bake for 40 minutes.

For a golden crust, change the oven mode to Broil 425 degrees for 5 minutes at the end of the cooking time.

Remove the lasagna from the oven and allow it to rest for 10 - 15 minutes before serving.

Serves 6 - 8