

10/11/12 - Individual Vegetable Lasagnas

We all love lasagna and in my kosher kitchen it is always vegetable. The barely chewy pasta with crispy ruffled edges enrobes the creamy cheesy ooze of sauce punctuated with sautéed vegetables all covered in flavorful marinara sauce. A bit of



I wanted to serve lasagna on my dairy party buffet. Usually there is a little problem when you serve a large dish of baked lasagna, the corner pieces are great; easy to serve but missing enough filling, the inner pieces are sometimes a little soupy not quite set up and we all know when guests serve themselves the lasagna gets torn up with drips and mess. My solution was to make the lasagna in individual ramekins. Easy for guests to take one off the buffet and full flavor in each one it seemed a great solution. All I had to do was figure out the mechanics.

One lasagna noodle was too little, so two, folded side up or down, coiled or layered? Read the recipe and look at the pictures to see what I did.

Serves 20 to

8 cups marinara sauce

2 boxes dried lasagna noodles (20-24 sheets of lasagna)

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 teaspoon salt

Water

Vegetables:

2 packs (8 ounce) pre-sliced washed mushrooms

4 zucchini washed and dried

2 tablespoons olive oil

Salt and Pepper to taste

6 tablespoons butter

1/2 cup flour

4 cups whole milk

3 cups grated Parmesano Reggiano

10 ounces grated mozzarella

1 bunch fresh basil leaves, washed and dried

Prepare marinara sauce and set aside, I made the sauce from a combination chopped fresh tomatoes and canned chopped fresh tomatoes in puree. Fry a few cloves sliced garlic in a couple tablespoons olive oil, add fresh tomatoes, sauté, and then add canned tomatoes. Cover and simmer for several hours. Sauce may be made ahead and frozen or it keeps for several days refrigerated.

Heat two large sauté pans on medium-high heat. Add a tablespoon of olive oil to each, and place mushrooms in one and thin sliced zucchini in the other. Sauté vegetables until golden and cooked and season with salt and pepper. Set vegetables aside.



Bring a large stock pot of water to a boil, salt water, add olive oil and add lasagna noodles one at a time. Boil lasagna for about 6 to 7 minutes until pasta is al dente. Drain and separate individual noodles. I spread them out on a large silpat so they won't stick to anything. A piece of greased foil would work fine.

Next make the Béchamel sauce. Heat a 4 quart sauce pan on low, add butter and stir until melted. Add flour and stir with butter on low heat for several minutes. Whisk milk into sauce pan and continue whisking until the butter and flour are all dissolved into milk. Raise heat a little bit and continue stirring with a wooden spoon until sauce is thick and easily coats the back of a spoon. Reduce heat and add half of Parmesan cheese. Stir until cheese is incorporated and sauce is thick and beautiful. Turn off the heat.

Now that all parts are assembled, line them up and make lasagnas. Place ramekins in rimmed baking sheets. Place two tablespoons or so of marinara sauce in bottom of each ramekin.



Take two noodles end to end with a little overlap. Using a small spoon, spoon a one inch wide ribbon of béchamel sauce down the center length wise. Sprinkle a few zucchini and mushrooms on top of béchamel sauce. Sparingly drop some grated mozzarella on top of vegetables. Fold lasagna noodles in half lengthwise. Roll up lengthwise, being careful to maintain fold. Take coil of lasagna noodles and place ruffled side up into ramekin. Top each ramekin with more marinara sauce, spooning it into the nooks and crannies and top each one with a bit more grated mozzarella and then Parmesan.



Preheat oven to 350° F. When all lasagna ramekins are filled, cover with heavy duty foil, loosely, so that sauce and cheese on top are not touched by foil. Place baking sheet in oven and bake 1/2 hour covered and 1/2 hour uncovered to brown

or until cheese is bubbling and noodle edges are turning golden. Remove from oven. Roll up basil leaves like a cigar and cut across to form ribbons of basil (chiffonade). Garnish lasagna and serve.

The lasagna can be made ahead and frozen ready to bake on baking sheets. Defrost and bake day of your party. If freezing wrap in plastic to keep them airtight.

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