spinach artichoke lasagna

Ingredients

Instructions

Spinach Artichoke Lasagna
makes 6-8 LARGE portions

For the sauce:
1 T olive oil
1 sweet yellow onion, diced
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 large (28oz) can crushed tomatoes
2 (14oz) cans diced tomatoes
1 T tomato paste
1 T anchovy paste (DO NOT FEAR the anchovies! They do not taste like fish, just… kind of nutty and salty. If you are totally repulsed by this, feel free to leave it out)
salt and pepper

For the filling:
about 20oz whole milk ricotta (approximately 1.5 of the 15 ounce containers, give or take)
16 oz box/bag of frozen, chopped spinach - thawed and all excess moisture squeezed out
1 can of artichoke hearts, packed in water, chopped
1/2 c grated parmesan cheese
1 egg, lightly beaten
1/2 t freshly ground black pepper
pinch of kosher salt, if needed

For lasagna assembly:
Tomato sauce
Spinach artichoke filling
1/2 pound lasagna noodles (no-boil are preferred, but it's up to you)
1 1/4 pound mozzarella cheese, shredded



Summary

Yield: 8
Prep Time: 5 minutes
Category: Dinner
Cuisine: Italian

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To make the sauce:

1.) Heat olive oil in a pot over medium heat. Add onion, and saute until translucent, then add garlic, and cook just until fragrant, about 1 minute. Season onions and garlic with a small pinch of kosher salt and a few grinds of pepper.

2.) Add all three cans of tomatoes, tomato paste, and anchovy paste, and stir until everything is well-combined. Season again with a pinch of kosher salt and a few grinds of pepper.

3.) Let the sauce simmer for about 30 minutes, while you assemble everything else for your lasagna, until it has thickened nicely.

To make the filling:

(Only one can of artichokes necessary!)
1.) Start by thawing your frozen spinach in the microwave. Once it is thawed, let it cool for a few minutes, until you can handle it without burning your hands.

2.) Dump your spinach into a clean kitchen towel (or about 5 layers of paper towel), gather up the edges of the towel, and gently squeeze the liquid from the spinach over your sink. Keep squeezing until you cannot squeeze any more liquid out - and then give it one more squeeze, just for good measure. You want to remove as much of the liquid from the spinach as humanly possible - so it doesn't make your lasagna all watery!

3.) Drain your artichokes well, and chop them into about 1/2″ pieces.

4.) In a mixing bowl, combine your ricotta, artichokes, spinach, parmesan cheese, egg, and black pepper, until all the ingredients are evenly distributed. Once everything is mixed together, give it a quick taste - if it tastes a touch bland, then add a pinch of kosher salt and mix it in. If it tastes rich and delicious, you don't need anymore salt (the parmesan cheese adds a good amount of salt - so you don't always need to add more). If you are scared to taste the mixture because of the raw egg (to which I say: how do you test your raw cookie dough when you bake?! A travesty, I tell you), then just add a small pinch of salt to your filling for good measure,

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and carry on.

Assembling the lasagna:

1.) Preheat your oven to 375°. In a 9×13 pan, start by spooning about 1/3 of your tomato sauce into the bottom. Spread it evenly around the bottom of the dish.

2.) Next, layer in some lasagna noodles, doing your best to cover the entire pan (I had to break some noodles in half lengthwise to cover the pan, without overlapping).

3.) On top of your noodles, put about 1/3 of your ricotta cheese mixture, and spread it out over the noodles as evenly as you can (this is another reason why no-bake noodles are awesome - since they are still rigid, it's easier to spread your ricotta mixture onto them).

4.) Top your ricotta mixture with 1/3 of your shredded mozzarella (once again, I will plead with you to PLEASE shred your own cheese - it melts so much better, and TASTES so much better than the pre-shredded stuff).

5.) Repeat steps 1-4 twice, until all of your ingredients are used up!

6.) If you have an olive oil mister, lightly mist the top of the lasagna with some oil - it will help keep the cheese moist, and also help it brown up nicely. You can also dot the top of the lasagna with small pieces of butter (about 1/2 T total) if you prefer.

7.) Place your pan of lasagna onto a rimmed baking sheet covered in foil - my pan was REALLY, REALLY full, and I knew it would bubble over and create a huge mess in my oven if I didn't put it on to a baking sheet. Using a rimmed baking sheet also makes it easier to pull the lasagna in and out of the oven, as it is HEAVY, and I sometimes struggle to get a good grip on the tiny edges of most baking/casserole dishes.

8.) Bake for about 35 minutes, until the cheese on top is golden brown in spots, and the lasagna is bubbling around the edges. Let the lasagna stand for about 10 minutes to firm up, before cutting and serving.

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As I said, this lasagna is SO GOOD. It's rich, it's delicious, it's filled with tons of flavor - but best of all, it's not heavy at all! The spinach and artichokes add a lot of flavor, without a lot of heft. If you were desperate to put some meat into this, you could add some shredded chicken or ground turkey to the pasta sauce, but I truly don't think you need it, as I think the meat would detract from the flavor of the tomatoes and spinach and artichokes (I especially would not use a pork or beef product in the sauce - I think the intensity of the flavors of those meats would completely overpower the delicate flavor of the artichokes).