

How to make Italian Lasagna

<https://moneysmartfamily.com/money-saving-tips/ground-beef-main-dish-recipes-super-page/#lasagna>



This homemade Italian Lasagna recipe and our Authentic Italian Spaghetti Sauce recipe have been handed down in our family for 4 generations. It's one of our awesome ground beef main dish recipes. It's a great meal for feeding a large group of people. We've prepared this recipe to serve between 100 and 275 people at different functions – Eagle Court of Honors and Weddings. It is always a big hit and can be prepared well in advance of the date you want to serve it. Annette always says that this lasagna recipe tastes much, much better than Stouffer's Lasagna.

Ingredients (serves 20 to 25 people):

Deep dish roasting pan: at least 3 inches deep – if you use a shallower pan, the ingredients will spill over the edge of the pan and make a mess in your oven . . . unless you put it on a large cookie sheet. We've discovered that you can't make the pan as full of ingredients if you try to squeeze it into a regular sized roasting pan.

15 Lasagna Noodles: Commercial Grade (we purchase ours from Smart & Final)

Ricotta Cheese (part skim): 5 lb tub. Using ½ tub for each layer. You could get by with two 2 lb containers – and only use 2 lbs on each layer

Mozzarella Cheese: 2 – 3 lbs shredded and divided into 3 equal portions. One portion for each of 2 layers and the final portion for the topping

Parmesan Cheese: 3 ounces of grated Parmesan cheese. One ounce for each of 2 layers with the final ounce of Parmesan used for the topping.

Spaghetti Sauce: 8 quarts. You will use approximately 4 quarts in making the lasagna and that will leave you with 4 quarts to be used as sauce on top of the lasagna and for sopping up with garlic bread when you serve it.

Ground Beef: 2 lbs cooked with onion, garlic powder, salt, and pepper, and divided into 1-pound containers.

Garlic Powder or Granulated Garlic: 2 TBS added to ground beef while cooking

Onion: 1 large diced small and added to ground beef while cooking

Salt: ½ tsp – add to ground beef while cooking

Pepper: ¼ tsp – add to ground beef while cooking

Plastic wrap and aluminum foil.

Directions (it's a two-day process, so leave yourself plenty of time):

The day before assembling the lasagna:

Make spaghetti sauce the day before. Cook ground beef with salt, pepper, garlic, and onion. Cut the ground beef while it is cooking to break it up so you have crumbles, not chunks. Drain off the fat and discard it. Divide into 2 separate but equal containers. Save to add to the lasagna layers.

The day of making the lasagna:

Put a 12-quart pot of water up to boil and start cooking 5 full-length lasagna noodles at a time. These will be used for the bottom layer of the lasagna. Parboil noodles for 10 minutes. You don't want them cooked all the way or they'll turn to mush when you cook the full pan of lasagna

1. Coat the bottom of your deep-dish roasting pan with approximately 3 ladles of spaghetti sauce.
2. Lay 5 partially cooked noodles in the bottom of the pan overlapping each noodle by about ½ inch. Trim ends to fit in the bottom without going up the sides.
3. Spread 1 pound of the meat mixture over the noodles.
4. Cover the meat mixture with a light layer of spaghetti sauce.
5. Spread 2 to 2 ½ pounds of Ricotta Cheese in large dollops over the sauce and meat layer.
6. Evenly sprinkle 1 lb of the Mozzarella cheese as the next layer.
7. Evenly sprinkle 1 ounce of Parmesan cheese onto the Mozzarella cheese

Repeat steps 2 thru 7 for your second layer – you can use cut / partial length noodles in this layer. Top the second layer of ingredients with noodles and gently press down on the noodles to even out any lumps. Spread a layer of sauce on top of the final layer of noodles. Sprinkle the last pound of Mozzarella cheese and Parmesan cheese on top.

Baking Instructions:

Bake covered with aluminum foil for 1 hour and 45 minutes at 350 degrees Remove from oven and let stand for 15 minutes to set up before cutting. We cut the lasagna into approximately 2-inch squares. When serving it is helpful to use a spatula and a knife or a second spatula to help get the lasagna out of the pan so the pieces don't slide onto a plate.

Freezing Instructions:

We've prepared lasagna and frozen it for 3 to 4 months with this storage method and it is indistinguishable from fresh-made lasagna.

Cover each pan with a layer of plastic wrap and then a layer of aluminum foil. Years ago we learned that if you only put aluminum foil on the pan, the acidity of the spaghetti sauce would eat holes in the foil. *Be sure to remove the plastic wrap before cooking.*