



AAUW Lasagna Bolognese Recipe

Makes 3 - 9x7 deep dish pans of lasagna (6 servings each)

There are 6 components of the recipe;

1. Make the sauce. In this case we are making Bolognese sauce
2. Make the bechamel
3. Make the mozzarella/ricotta filling
4. Assemble the lasagna
5. Freeze the completed, unbaked lasagna
6. Defrosting & Baking instructions

#1. Make the Bolognese Sauce

#1 Ingredients

- 5 T. olive oil, divided
- 6-8 T. butter
- 6-8 cloves garlic (depending on the size of the individual cloves), finely minced (food processor preferred)
- 1 medium-large onion, finely dice (food processor preferred) (1 c.)
- 2 lg carrot, peeled & trimmed & finely diced (food processor preferred)(1 & 1/3 c.)
- 6 stalks celery, finely diced (food processor preferred)(1 & 1/3 c.)
- 1.25 # sweet Italian sausage links (casing removed)(5 big links)
- 1 .34# grass fed organic ground beef (85/15 fat content)
- 1 T. + 1.5 t. kosher salt
- 1 t. ground pepper – freshly ground if possible
- 1 T. dried oregano
- 1 T. fennel seed (if available)
- 2 T. finely minced fresh thyme leaves
- 6T. finely chopped fresh basil leaves
- 6 T. freshly minced Italian parsley leaves
- 1 chicken bouillon cube or 1 T. chicken Better than Bouillon
- 4 T. tomato paste
- 2 c red wine
- 1.5 c. organic chicken stock
- 1 c. whole milk (organic if possible)
- .5 c. heavy whipping cream + .5c to be added ½ hr before sauce is complete
- 1 lg can (28 Oz) San Marzano organic crushed tomatoes

#1 Directions:

1. In a large Dutch oven, heat 3 T olive oil and 6 T. butter over medium heat until the butter melts and stops foaming. then add the onions, carrots & celery. Cook the soffrito for about 10 minutes or until it is lightly brown. If mixture seems a little dry add additional 2 T of butter. During the last minute of cooking, add the garlic and sauté for about 1 minute more, until fragrant.

2. Salt & pepper the ground beef and work the salt and pepper into the meat with your hands as you would for meatballs (gently so that the beef is still loose when you place it into the sauté pan).
3. Add the remaining 2 T. olive oil to the soffrito and then add the salted and peppered ground beef to the pan along with the sweet Italian sausage that has been removed from the casing. Break up both the meats with the end of a spoon or a kitchen scraper so that no big pieces of meat remain. Brown the meats slowly until they are a nice even medium brown color. This should take about 15-20 minutes. The mixture should be stirred frequently so that it does not stick.
4. Deglaze the pan over medium high heat by adding the red wine to the pan. Cook for about 5-10 minutes until the wine is reduced slightly (by about ¼ to 1/3).
5. Add the tomato paste, the dried oregano, the fennel (if available) and the thyme, the basil & Italian parsley and sauté for about 5 minutes.
6. Add the chicken stock, the Better than Bouillon (or dried bouillon cube), milk & .5 c. heavy whipping cream (reserving the additional .5 c. of cream until the last 30 minutes of cooking) & the crushed tomatoes and simmer very gently for 2 hours. If using whole tomatoes, process the full can of tomatoes in the food processor to break up any large pieces.
7. Let the sauce sit & cool down before using. If making well ahead of assembly, the sauce can be frozen. Be sure to defrost the sauce following the defrosting instructions below at least 24 hours before final assembly.

#2. Make the bechamel (white sauce):

#2 Ingredients:

- 6 T. unsalted butter
- 6 T all-purpose flour (or gluten free flour if making a gf version)
- 4.5 c. whole organic milk
- .75 c (6 oz)heavy cream
- 2 T. finely minced thyme leaves
- About ½ - 1 t. freshly grated nutmeg
- Approximately ½ - 1t. Kosher salt or more to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper (1/2 t.)
- 2 c. grated parmesan

#2 Instructions:

1. In a large pot, melt butter over medium heat being careful not to let butter brown. Off the stove add the flour all at once & whisk for about 30 seconds or until well blended
2. Place pot back on stove, reduce heat to low and slowly whisk in 1 c milk until well combined. Once well blended, add the remaining milk and heavy cream in 1 c. increments , mixing well after each addition until all the milk & cream are used and the sauce is free of all lumps. If the sauce is too thick, add a little more milk until it turns into a nice and creamy consistency.
3. Increase heat to medium & continue cooking sauce while stirring occasionally until it thickens (7-10 minutes) and coats the back of a wooden spoon. (Mine took more like 12-15 minutes)
4. Add in the parmesan cheese, stirring to incorporate & remove from heat. Season with thyme leaves, salt and pepper & nutmeg & mix until cheese is melted through.
5. Adjust seasonings to taste.

#3. Make the mozzarella/ricotta mixture**#3 Ingredients:**

6 whole large to extra large eggs
1 t. Salt and ½ t. pepper or to taste
4 T. freshly small chopped basil
4 T. freshly small chopped Italian parsley
1 c. Whole Milk ricotta
5 c. shredded mozzarella

#3: Instructions:

1. In a large bowl, beat eggs with salt, pepper until well combined.
2. Add ricotta & fresh herbs and stir well to combine.
3. Add shredded mozzarella and stir again to combine. Set aside.

#4. Assemble the lasagna**#4 Ingredients:**

3 sheets pre-cooked, frozen lasagna sheets (cut in 1/2) for each of 3 9X7 pans, defrosted
1 c. shredded mozzarella
2 T finely chopped Italian pasley

#4 Instructions:

1. Spoon about ¾ c. meat sauce on the bottom of a 9x7 pan, then cover with 1 (1/2) lasagna sheet, sprinkled lightly with kosher salt (1-2 lg pinches)
2. On top of the first lasagna sheet layer with 1 c. meat sauce, 3/4 c. bechamel and 1 c. of the mozzarella/ricotta mixture
3. Cover with 1 (1/2) sheet lasagna sheet, sprinkled lightly (1-2 lg pinches) with kosher salt.
4. Repeat ingredient layers, starting with meat sauce, bechamel, and then mozzarella/ricotta mixture.
5. Top with remaining ½ sheet of lasagna pasta sprinkled lightly with kosher salt.
6. Pour 1 c. meat sauce & ¾ c. - 1 c. white sauce over the top lasagna sheet & top with the 1 c mozzarella/ricotta mixture. Sprinkle plain shredded mozzarella over the top. Cover top layer with parchment paper and then top with the disposable container lid, sealing tightly by crimping edges.

See page 4 for freezing and defrost instructions

#5. Freeze the completed, unbaked lasagna

Chill the lasagna in the refrigerator for several hours. This way it will freeze faster & have less chance of getting freezer burn. For extra protection you can put it in a 2.5 gallon freezer bag. Lasagna can be frozen for up to 3 months.

#6. Defrost/Baking Instructions for AAUW Lasagna Fest Lasagna

1. Remove lasagna from freezer (where it can be stored safely for up to 3 months). Thaw lasagna completely in the refrigerator. This is likely to take **up to 24 hours**. You may also bake frozen directly from the freezer, adjusting baking time accordingly. See below for alternative baking directions for frozen lasagna.
2. Preheat oven to **375 degrees**. Remove lasagna container lid, but not the parchment paper that sits directly on top of the lasagna. Tightly cover lasagna top with aluminum foil and place on a sheet pan big enough to hold the disposable lasagna pan. **Bake for 45 minutes** in a 375 degree oven. After 45 minutes, remove lasagna from oven (including the sheet pan), remove foil and parchment paper, being careful to gently separate parchment paper from lasagna. Using a kitchen knife, scrape back onto the casserole any lasagna that may be sticking to the parchment. Before putting the lasagna back into the oven to finish baking, and using a very sharp knife, pierce all 4 sides of the disposable pan with several cuts per side deep into the lasagna. This will allow excess moisture to escape onto the sheet pan. **IT IS IMPORTANT TO DO THIS SO THE LASAGNA IS FIRMER & EASIER TO CUT & SERVE.** Return the pierced pan back to the oven & continue baking for **an additional 25-30 minutes** until the lasagna is bubbly & the cheese begins to get brown in spots. You can turn on the broiler for the last minute or two to get the browning you desire. Keep a very close eye on it to make sure it doesn't burn.
3. Remove the lasagna from the oven & let set for an **additional 45 minutes**. Sprinkle chopped Italian parsley & fresh basil if desired on top before serving.
4. If baking directly from freezer, follow prep instructions & baking instructions (i.e., remove container lid, but not the parchment paper, tightly cover lasagna top with aluminum foil, etc.) but, bake for twice the time.

Buon Appetito!