

# Baked Ziti

HEAT UP YOUR KITCHEN WITH THIS HEARTY PASTA RECIPE!



## ingredients

### Sauce:

3 tablespoons olive oil

3 sprigs fresh oregano  
OR 1 tablespoon dried oregano

1 tablespoon dried basil PLUS 1/4 cup whole fresh basil leaves

1/4 teaspoon hot red pepper flakes (optional)

1 medium onion, thinly chopped

5 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped

1 red or yellow bell pepper, seeded and chopped

1 28-ounce can chopped tomatoes

salt and pepper to taste

### Ricotta Filling:

1/2 cup fresh parsley, chopped

1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

1/2 pound shredded mozzarella cheese

1 pound whole milk ricotta

1 pound dried ziti pasta

2 to 3 tablespoons Parmesan or Romano cheese for sprinkling

## supplies

● 9 x 13-inch casserole dish, greased

● medium saucepan

● large pot

● large mixing bowl

● colander

● measuring cups and spoons

## WhatToDo:

- 1 Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
- 2 Combine all oil, oregano, dried basil, pepper flakes, onion, and garlic in medium saucepan. Simmer on low heat until onions are soft and translucent.
- 3 Add bell pepper and cook for 2 minutes.
- 4 Add chopped tomatoes, cover, and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes.
- 5 Fill large pot with water. Heat until boiling.
- 6 Add pasta to water and cook uncovered until pasta is tender, but still slightly firm.
- 7 While pasta is boiling and tomato sauce is simmering, prepare Ricotta filling by combining all ingredients in the large mixing bowl.
- 8 Drain pasta in the colander and pour half into casserole dish.
- 9 Add 1 layer of Ricotta filling, 1 layer of tomato sauce, and a handful of fresh basil. Mix and repeat with remaining pasta, Ricotta filling, tomato sauce, and basil.
- 10 Sprinkle top with remaining Parmesan or Romano cheese.
- 11 Bake in oven until cheese is bubbly and light browned. It should take 25 to 30 minutes.

### Author's Note:

- Note: The preparation time for this dish is 30 minutes. The cooking time is 45 minutes. This dish serves 6 to 8 main-course servings.

—Alexis Burling