Meat Lasagna

Ingredients:

* 12 whole wheat lasagna noodles
* 1 pound lean ground beef
* 2 cloves garlic, chopped
* 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
* 1 teaspoon dried oregano, or to taste
* salt and ground black pepper to taste
* 1 (16 ounce) package cottage cheese
* 2 eggs
* 1/2 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
* 1 1/2 (25 ounce) jars tomato-basil pasta sauce
* 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese

Directions

* Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
* Fill a large pot with lightly salted water and bring to a rolling boil over high heat. Once the water is boiling, add the lasagna noodles a few at a time, and return to a boil. Cook the pasta uncovered, stirring occasionally, until the pasta has cooked through, but is still firm to the bite, about 10 minutes. Remove the noodles to a plate.
* Place the ground beef into a skillet over medium heat, add the garlic, garlic powder, oregano, salt, and black pepper to the skillet. Cook the meat, chopping it into small chunks as it cooks, until no longer pink, about 10 minutes. Drain excess grease.
* In a bowl, mix the cottage cheese, eggs, and Parmesan cheese until thoroughly combined.
* Place 4 noodles side by side into the bottom of a 9x13-inch baking pan; top with a layer of the tomato-basil sauce, a layer of ground beef mixture, and a layer of the cottage cheese mixture. Repeat layers twice more, ending with a layer of sauce; sprinkle top with the mozzarella cheese. Cover the dish with aluminum foil.
* Bake in the preheated oven until the casserole is bubbling and the cheese has melted, about 30 minutes. Remove foil and bake until cheese has begun to brown, about 10 more minutes. Allow to stand at least 10 minutes before serving.

Chicken Fettuccini Alfredo

Ingredients

* 6 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves - cut into cubes
* 6 tablespoons butter, divided
* 4 cloves garlic, minced, divided
* 1 tablespoon Italian seasoning
* 1 pound fettuccini pasta
* 1 onion, diced
* 1 (8 ounce) package sliced mushrooms
* 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
* 1 tablespoon salt
* 3/4 teaspoon ground white pepper
* 3 cups milk
* 1 cup half-and-half
* 3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
* 8 ounces shredded Colby-Monterey Jack cheese
* 3 roma (plum) tomatoes, diced
* 1/2 cup sour cream

Directions:

* In a large skillet over medium heat combine chicken, 2 tablespoons butter, 2 cloves garlic, and Italian seasoning. Cook until chicken is no longer pink inside. Remove from skillet and set aside.
* Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add pasta and cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until al dente; drain.
* Meanwhile, melt 4 tablespoons butter in the skillet. Saute onion, 2 cloves garlic, and mushrooms until onions are transparent. Stir in flour, salt and pepper; cook 2 minutes. Slowly add milk and half-and-half, stirring until smooth and creamy. Stir in Parmesan and Colby-Monterey Jack cheeses; stir until cheese is melted. Stir in chicken mixture, tomatoes and sour cream. Serve over cooked fettuccini.

Cannoli

Ingredients

Shells:

Filling:

* 1 (32 ounce) container ricotta cheese
* 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
* 1 teaspoon lemon zest, or to taste
* 4 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped (optional)
* 3 cups all-purpose flour
* 1/4 cup white sugar
* 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
* 3 tablespoons shortening
* 1 egg
* 1 egg yolk
* 1/2 cup sweet Marsala wine
* 1 tablespoon distilled white vinegar
* 2 tablespoons water
* 1 egg white
* 1 quart oil for frying, or as needed

Directions:

* In a medium bowl, mix together the flour, sugar and cinnamon. Cut in the shortening until it is in pieces no larger than peas. Make a well in the center, and pour in the egg, egg yolk, Marsala wine, vinegar and water. Mix with a fork until the dough becomes stiff, then finish it by hand, kneading on a clean surface. Add a bit more water if needed to incorporate all of the dry ingredients. Knead for about 10 minutes, then cover and refrigerate for 1 to 2 hours.
* Divide the cannoli dough into thirds, and flatten each one just enough to get through the pasta machine. Roll the dough through successively thinner settings until you have reached the thinnest setting. Dust lightly with flour if necessary. Place the sheet of dough on a lightly floured surface. Using a form or large glass or bowl, cut out 4 to 5 inch circles. Dust the circles with a light coating of flour. This will help you later in removing the shells from the tubes. Roll dough around cannoli tubes, sealing the edge with a bit of egg white.
* Heat the oil to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C) in a deep-fryer or deep heavy skillet. Fry shells on the tubes a few at a time for 2 to 3 minutes, until golden. Use tongs to turn as needed. Carefully remove using the tongs, and place on a cooling rack set over paper towels. Cool just long enough that you can handle the tubes, then carefully twist the tube to remove the shell. Using a tea towel may help you get a better grip. Wash or wipe off the tubes, and use them for more shells. Cooled shells can be placed in an airtight container and kept for up to 2 months. You should only fill them immediately or up to 1 hours before serving.
* To make the filling, stir together the ricotta cheese and confectioners' sugar using a spoon. Fold in lemon zest and chocolate. Use a pastry bag to pipe into shells, filling from the center to one end, then doing the same from the other side. Dust with additional confectioners' sugar and grated chocolate for garnish when serving.

Coffee Flavored Panna Cotta

Ingredients

* 4 USMETRIC
* 500 milliliters heavy cream
* 200 milliliters whole milk
* 170 grams sugar
* 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
* 1 packet instant coffee
* 6 gelatin (sheets)
* dark chocolate (melted to brush inside the mold)

Directions

* Soak the gelatin sheets in cold water for 10 minutes and wring out the excess water.
* Brush the top of the mold with some melted dark chocolate and place the mold in the refrigerator to chill well.
* Place the heavy cream in a saucepan with the milk, sugar, vanilla extract, and coffee, and heat the mixture while stirring.
* When the mixture begins to boil, turn off the heat and remove the saucepan from the stove.
* Add the gelatin sheets and stir well to incorporate.
* Pour the mixture in the mold.
* Refrigerate for 4 to 5 hours.
* Turn the panna cotta out onto a serving platter and garnish as you wish.