



mushroom lasagna

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Mushroom Lasagna

Adapted, only a little, from [Ina Garten](#)

[Last time I posted](#), I joked about the number of changes I make to the average recipe. However, Ina Garten doesn't write average recipes. Her recipes never fail to produce dishes that require no tweaking to receive rave reviews, and this one was no different. The only things I messed with were adding a clove of minced garlic to the sauce, because it's so wonderful against the creaminess and swapping out portobellos with cremini, or brown mushrooms as portobellos are more expensive, harder to find, break easily and are nothing but overgrown brown mushrooms.

My only gripe with this recipe is the number of pots it uses; I counted 4 in the original (not including the colander, cutting board and knife, ugh) and managed to trim it to 3 in my version, below. However, I did forget **all** about the inconvenience of dishes once I tasted the final dish — completely and totally worth it.

Serves 6 to 8 (more as a first course)

Salt

Olive oil

3/4 pound dried lasagna noodles

1 large clove garlic, minced

4 cups whole milk

3/4 cup (12 tablespoons or 1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter, divided

1/2 cup all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 teaspoon ground nutmeg (I used less, because this seemed like a lot)

1 1/2 pounds cremini or portobello mushrooms

1 cup freshly grated parmesan

Preheat your oven to 375°F. Bring a large, wide (if you use a wide one, you can save a dish later and saute your mushrooms in the bottom of it) of water to boil with salt and a splash of oil, that will help keep your noodles from sticking together as they drain. Add the lasagna noodles and cook for 10 minutes. Drain and set aside.

Make béchamel: Bring the milk and garlic to simmer in a saucepan, or heat it in your microwave, and set it aside. Melt 1/2 cup (8 tablespoons or 1 stick) butter in a large saucepan. If your name is Deb, you will probably brown this butter, too. Add the flour and cook for one minute over low heat, stirring constantly with a whisk or wooden spoon. Pour in the hot milk, a little at a time at first and stirring until combined. Once you've added half of it, you can add the second half all at once, along with 1 1/2 teaspoons table salt, the pepper, and nutmeg. Cook over medium-low heat, stirring or whisking frequently, for 3 to 5 minutes, or until thick. Set aside.

Prepare mushrooms: Discard portobello mushroom stems and/or trim the ends of the cremini stems. Slice mushrooms 1/4-inch thick. Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil and 2 tablespoons butter over medium in the bottom of the large, wide pot you used to cook the noodles earlier, or in a large sauté pan. Cook half the mushrooms with a couple pinches of salt for about 5 minutes, or until they are tender and release some of their juices, tossing to make sure they cook evenly. Repeat with additional oil and

butter, and remaining mushrooms.

Assemble lasagna: Spread some of the sauce in the bottom of an 8 x 12 or 9 x 13 baking dish. (Ina recommends the former, I only had the latter; if you'd like to freeze or give this dish as a gift, remember to use a foil pan). Arrange a layer of noodles on top*, then more sauce (about 1/4 of what remains), 1/3 of the mushrooms and 1/4 cup grated parmesan. Repeat two more times then top with a final layer of noodles, your remaining sauce and last 1/4 cup of parmesan.

Bake for 45 minutes, or until top is browned and the sauce is bubbly. Let sit at room temperature for 15 minutes before serving. To freeze for future use, allow it to cool completely and wrap two to three times in plastic wrap before freezing.

* Burning question: Do you overlap your lasagna noodles on each layer? I think that's the way it is usually done, but it has been so long since I made lasagna, I couldn't remember. I decided to line mine up, and ended up with three neat rows down my 9 x 13 pan (I trimmed the ends of the noodles, because I can occasionally be a neat freak) and found it exceptionally neat and pretty to serve, as each piece could have two ruffy edges. This meant I only used 12 noodles total, or about 2/3 of a one-pound box.

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