

Pastitsio

Lasagne the way Greeks do it!!

Ingredients

Olive oil, to grease
2 tablespoons dried (packaged) breadcrumbs
1 x 500g pkt Macherroni elbows pasta
2 tablespoons olive oil
1kg beef mince
1 brown onion, coarsely chopped
3 garlic cloves, crushed
1 x 400g bottle passata
1 x can peeled plum tomatoes, chopped
1tsp dried organum
1 tsp fresh chopped organum
80ml (1/3 cup) water
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
70g (1 cup) shredded parmesan

Bechamel sauce

80g butter
50g (1/3 cup) plain flour
1L (4 cups) milk
4 eggs, lightly whisked

Method

Preheat oven to 180°C. Brush a 6.5cm-deep, 26 x 33cm (base measurement) ovenproof dish with oil to grease. Add the breadcrumbs and shake to coat.

Cook the pasta in a large saucepan of salted boiling water following packet directions or until al dente. Drain. Return to the pan.

Meanwhile, heat half the oil in a frying pan over medium-high heat. Add half the mince and cook, stirring, for 3-4 minutes or until mince changes colour. Transfer to a heatproof bowl. Repeat with remaining mince, reheating the pan between batches.

Heat the remaining oil in the pan. Add the onion and garlic and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until onion is soft. Add the mince, passata, water and cinnamon and cook, stirring, for 5-8 minutes or until the sauce thickens slightly.

To make the bechamel sauce, melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat until foaming. Add flour and cook, stirring, for 1 minute or until the mixture bubbles. Remove from heat. Gradually add the milk, stirring constantly until smooth. Place the pan over medium heat and cook, stirring constantly, until the sauce thickens. Remove from heat and whisk in the egg. Season with salt and pepper.

Add 310ml (1 1/4 cups) of the bechamel sauce to the pasta and stir until well combined. Place half the pasta mixture in the prepared pan. Spoon over the mince mixture. Top with the remaining pasta mixture. Spread the remaining bechamel sauce over the top. Sprinkle with parmesan. Bake for 45-50 minutes or until golden. Serve.

THE COOKERY

by The Secret Jozi Chef

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