

July 28, 2019

THE ULTIMATE CLASSIC LASAGNA – SICILIAN STYLE

When I make lasagna, I go all the way. If you're going to go through all the trouble of making it, it might as well be a showstopper. Go big or go home is my motto when making lasagna. I like my lasagna five-layers high, with lots of cheese and smothered in a thick, flavorful meat sauce. What makes this lasagna different from any other – it's the peas. Yep, Sicilians put peas in their meat sauce. It adds just a touch of sweetness. But the real secret to making a fantastic lasagna is using quality ingredients.

To start off, use the best quality ricotta and grated cheese you can get for making the filling. I know that's not easy in some parts of the country. The same is true for the tomato sauce. Not all canned tomatoes are alike. Some canned tomatoes are more acidic than others. The Cento brand is consistent on quality and is available in most supermarkets. That's not to say there aren't other good brands out there. I never have to add sugar to the sauce if I use Cento brand canned tomatoes. If your sauce does come out a little on the acidic side, add a teaspoon or more of sugar to balance it.

INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds (48-ounces) ricotta cheese

1 1/2 pounds shredded mozzarella cheese, divided

1 to 1 1/4 cups Pecorino Romano or Parmesan cheese, divided

3 large eggs

3 tablespoons flat-leaf parsley leaves, minced

3 tablespoons olive oil

1/2 large onion, chopped

1 stalk celery, finely chopped

1 small carrot, finely chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

COOK THE LASAGNA NOODLES: While the sauce is cooking, bring a large pot of salted water to boil with a small amount of vegetable oil. Add



Stir in peas and season with salt and pepper to taste. Cook an additional 15 minutes. Taste the sauce, if acidic add 1 teaspoon of sugar at a time, until balanced.



Add more water as needed for desired consistency. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in crushed tomatoes, tomato puree, and basil. Add 1 to 1 1/4 cups water, depending on how thick the sauce is. Cover and bring to a boil.



tomato paste and cook for 1 minute. Add the ground beef, sausage and pancetta, cook until browned. Stir in minutes. Add garlic and cook 1 minute longer. Raise heat to medium-high, Add onion, celery, and carrot, cook until vegetables are soft, about 6



medium heat. MAKE THE SAUCE: Heat olive oil in a 6-quart covered sauce pot over

DIRECTIONS:

rectangular baking dish.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED: 9-inch by 13-inch by 3.5 to 4-inch deep Minced parsley for garnish (optional)

Sugar

Salt and pepper

1 pound (16-ounces) dry lasagna noodles

6 to 8 large fresh basil leaves

1/2 cup frozen peas (optional)

1 can (28-ounces) tomato puree

1 can (28-ounces) crushed tomatoes

1 can (6-ounces) tomato paste

2-ounces pancetta, diced

2 Italian sausage links, casings removed

1 pound ground beef

