

# Lasagne

Who doesn't enjoy a good Lasagne? This one is quick and easy but packs a delicious punch of flavour that will have you returning for more and more and more ...

## Ingredients:

Yield: 6

### For the Mince

1kg lean beef mince

400grms chopped canned tomatoes

2 tbsp tomato puree

600ml beef stock

2 large onions (finely chopped)

2 celery stems (finely chopped)

4 cloves garlic (crushed to a paste)

60ml vegetable oil

1tsp ground cinnamon

2tsp mustard seeds

3 tbsp dried oregano

2 tbsp fresh Italian parsley

250ml white wine

Freshly ground black pepper

Pinch of salt

Cheddar and Mozzarella cheese for topping

Lasagne sheets (1 – 2 boxes depending on the size of your oven dish)

### **For the Béchamel Sauce**

60gms butter

60 gms plain flour

1 litre milk

55gms parmesan cheese

½ tsp ground nutmeg (optional)

Pinch or 2 of salt and pepper

### **Method:**

In a deep pot bring half the oil to temperature, add the mince and cook over a medium heat. While that's going on, heat another pan, add the remaining oil and gently \*sweat the onion and celery for 2 or 3 minutes, before adding the cinnamon and garlic and cooking for an additional 2 minutes before adding all, to the mince pot.

Now add the tomato puree, parsley, oregano, mustard seeds, canned tomatoes and the wine and stir to combine. Bring to the boil and then drop the temperature and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring regularly to prevent sticking to the pot.

Pour boiling water into the kitchen sink and lay pasta sheets – this will par cook the sheets, lessening the required cooking time.

Preheat the oven to 180°C

To make the Béchamel sauce ... Melt the butter in a heavy-based pot over a low heat, then add the flour. Stir with a whisk, and cook gently for 2- 3 minutes to make a white \*roux. Slowly pour the cold milk on to the roux, whisking as you do so, and bring to the boil over a medium heat, whisking continuously.

Once the sauce comes to the boil, lower the heat and simmer gently for about 10 minutes, stirring continuously to prevent lumps forming. Season to taste with salt, pepper (preferably white) and add the nutmeg. Continue stirring until the sauce thickens to the desired consistency. If it thickens too much, add a little milk, stir through and remove from the heat. Stir in the parmesan cheese and adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper.

Remove your pasta sheets carefully from the water and lay on a clean dish towel, cover with another dish towel to pat dry.

If your mince still contains a lot of liquid, increase the temperature and bring to the boil for a few minutes, to cook away some of the excess liquid. Remember however, that it is a mince sauce so you don't want to cook away all the delicious sauce you have just spent 40 minutes creating.

To assemble – spoon some of the mince mixture into your ovenproof dish, cover with lasagne sheets, spread over some of the béchamel sauce and repeat the process ending with a layer of béchamel sauce. Top with a mixture of cheddar and mozzarella cheese and bake in the oven for 25 – 30 minutes or until golden and bubbling goodness

**Cook Notes:**

\*Sweat – to sweat vegetables means to cook on a gentle heat to soften but not brown

\*Roux – A roux is a common way of starting many sauces. It is a mixture containing equal parts of flour to fat (butter) used to thicken liquids. The longer a roux cooks, the less its thickening ability.

