

Vegetable Polenta Lasagna

1.5 cups lowfat ricotta
1 egg yolk
2 Tbsp. chopped parsley
Polenta (recipe follows)
Vegetable sauce (recipe follows)
1 cup shredded lowfat mozzarella (or Italian blend) cheese

Preheat the oven to 350 and spray a large (11 x 7 or 13 x 9) baking dish with oil.

Mix together the ricotta, egg yolk, parsley, and freshly ground pepper to taste in a bowl.

Spread half the polenta over the bottom of the prepared pan.*

Spoon 2/3 of the vegetable mixture over the polenta. Next, spread the whole ricotta mixture over the vegetables. Top with the remaining polenta.*

Spoon the remaining 1/3 of the vegetables over the polenta layer, and then sprinkle with the mozzarella cheese.

Cover with foil and bake for 25-30 minutes. Remove the foil and continue to bake for 10 minutes until the cheese is bubbly and golden in spots.

**The first time I made this, I spread and cooled the polenta in the fridge for a while before proceeding. To do this, I spread half the mixture over the bottom of the baking dish; then, I lined a second, same-sized baking dish with foil and poured in the other half of the polenta. I built the lasagna in the first pan and was able to remove the second "slab" of polenta from the second pan easily, to use for the top layer. If you refrigerate the polenta for a while, you will need to extend the baking time a little.*

Polenta

4 cups low sodium vegetable or chicken broth
1.25 cups cornmeal
1/4 cup grated parmesan or Romano cheese
1 Tbsp. butter

Bring the broth to a boil, and then slowly stir in the cornmeal. Over low heat, whisk frequently until the polenta is cooked and pulling away from the sides, about 10 minutes.

Off the heat, stir in the butter and cheese and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Vegetable Sauce

1 Tbsp. olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 red bell pepper, cut into thin strips
8 oz. sliced mushrooms
4 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes
1 tsp. tomato paste
1/4 cup white wine
1 (15 oz) can fire roasted diced tomatoes
1/4 tsp. oregano
1/4 tsp. basil
8 oz. spinach

Heat a large pan over medium heat and add the oil. Once hot, stir in the onion and bell pepper and cook for about 3 minutes before adding the mushrooms and garlic. Continue to cook the vegetables until tender.

Stir in the red pepper flakes and tomato paste, and cook an additional minute to incorporate the tomato paste into the ingredients. Add the wine, bring to a boil, and deglaze the pan.

Stir in the tomatoes, oregano, basil, and salt and pepper to taste. Simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes or longer. Add the spinach and cook until just wilted.