

Lasagne alla Bolognese al Forno

Swick

Serves 1 | Active Time: 3 hours 15 minutes | Total Time: 4 hours

Chef's Notes

Step 6

Before rolling the dough, make sure there aren't any bits of dried dough on the rollers from last time. The rollers of the pasta machine should be clean and dry. You may want to dust them with a bit of flour, to be sure they are completely dry.

You can also prepare pasta sheets in advance and freeze them raw. Just place them onto a tray, separated by layers of parchment paper. Wrap the entire tray tightly with plastic wrap to prevent freezer burn. Cook from frozen.

Step 7

If you are using frozen lasagna noodles, add them directly to the water without thawing.

Step 8

For this recipe, we suggest using a 10 × 20-inch lasagne pan, but you can use any size of baking dish. A large the baking dish will result in a lasagne with fewer layers, which will take a shorter amount of time to bake. By using a smaller baking dish, you'll be able to create a thicker lasagne with more layers.

When assembling, don't make each layer really thick. Less is more. These noodles are so delicate, it's great to make more layers. Make sure you keep about 1 cup of besciamella for the top.

And just in case you were wondering:

Lasagna (with an "a")- refers to the noodle

Lasagne (with an "e")- refers to the dish

Making the Ragu

To begin the ragu, first émincé the garlic. Finely chop the onions, celery and carrots.

Next, preheat a large, heavy-bottomed pot over medium heat. Once hot, add the oil and vegetables (also known as mirepoix) and let cook until translucent, but not browned, about 5 minutes or so.

Gather the veal and pork. Very finely chop the pancetta or cut it into quarters and then pulse it in a food processor until ground. Once the vegetables are translucent, add all of the meat and increase the heat to high. Let the meat brown, stirring frequently, for about 15 minutes.

While the meat cooks, gather white wine, milk, tomato paste and thyme. Once the meat has browned nicely, add the tomato paste and stir to combine. Then add the white wine, milk and fresh thyme. Stir again, scraping the bottom if needed. Let everything come just to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and let simmer for 1 to 1 1/2 hours.

As the ragu cooks, remember to stir it occasionally, to prevent it from sticking or scorching. In the meantime, you can prepare the besciamella.

Step 1: Making the Ragu

- 5 cloves garlic
- 2 medium onions
- 4 ribs celery
- 2 carrots
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 lb ground veal
- 1 lb ground pork
- 4 oz pancetta
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1 cup whole milk
- 6 oz tomato paste
- 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves

Making the Besciamella

To make the besciamella, heat a saucepan over medium heat and melt the butter. Once melted, add the flour to create a roux and stir until smooth. Cook for about 6 to 7 minutes, stirring frequently, until it turns a light-golden brown.

Meanwhile, in a separate pot, heat the milk to just under a boil. Once the mixture has browned and the milk has heated, add the milk to the roux, about one cup at a time. Whisk constantly, until very smooth, bringing it back to a boil each time. Once all of the milk has been incorporated and the mixture has come back up to a gentle boil, turn the heat to low and let cook for about 10 minutes. Stir occasionally. The sauce should nicely coat the back of a spoon. Once done, remove from the heat and season with the salt and freshly-grated nutmeg. Transfer to a bowl and place plastic wrap directly onto the surface, to prevent a skin from forming. Leave a bit of space around the edges for the steam to escape while it cools.

Now, you can prepare the spinach to make the green pasta dough.

Step 2: Making the Besciamella

- 5 tbsp unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 3 cups whole milk
- 1 to 2 tsp sea salt
- 1/2 tsp grated nutmeg

Preparing the Spinach

To prepare the spinach, bring 3 quarts of salted water to a boil and set up an ice bath next to the stove.

Blanch the spinach leaves in the boiling water for 45 seconds. Remove with a slotted spoon or spider and immediately plunge into the ice bath to cool.

Once cool, using a strainer, squeeze out the excess water. Then place the spinach onto a kitchen towel and twist it to remove as much moisture as possible. Once the spinach is dry, set it aside and check on the ragu.

Step 3: Preparing the Spinach

- 3 qt water
- 1 tbsp sea salt
- 1 cup packed, fresh spinach leaves
(3.5 ounces)

Checking the Ragu

The ragu should be cooked until almost all of the liquid has evaporated, however, it should still be moist. Once it is done, season with salt and pepper to taste. Remove from the heat and let cool.

Step 4: Checking the Ragu

- sea salt (to taste)
- freshly ground black pepper (to taste)

Making the Green Pasta Dough

To make the pasta dough, chop the spinach very finely and combine it with the eggs. Mix until well combined. Mound the flour on the countertop and make a well in the center. Add the spinach/egg mixture. Begin to incorporate the flour, starting with the inner rim of the well. As you expand the well, keep pushing the outside edge of the flour to retain the well shape (don't worry if it looks messy).

When half of the flour is incorporated, the dough should begin to come together. Start to gently knead the dough with your hands to incorporate the rest of the flour. As soon as the dough comes together in a cohesive mass, set it aside. Don't worry if you have more than 1 cup of flour that has not been incorporated. Scrape up any dried bits of dough and leftover flour and discard. A bench scraper is the perfect tool for this.

Then lightly flour the countertop and continue kneading for about 10 minutes. Dust with a bit of flour, each time the dough sticks to your hands or the counter. Scrape the counter from time to time, just to make sure any dried bits aren't being incorporated into the dough.

After kneading for about ten minutes, the dough should be smooth and soft and just a touch tacky, but it should no longer be sticking to your hands or the countertop.

Once ready, wrap it in plastic wrap and allow it to rest for 30 minutes at room temperature before rolling it out.

Step 5: Making the Green Pasta Dough

- 3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, plus extra (for kneading)
- 5 large eggs

Rolling the Pasta Dough

To roll the pasta, first divide the dough into 8 equal portions. Set one piece aside and cover the remaining pieces with plastic wrap so they don't dry out.

Flatten the dough into a disc-like shape that is somewhat thicker in the middle and about 1/4" -inch thick at the edges. Lightly dust the dough with a bit of flour.

Whether using a hand crank or an electric pasta machine, adjust the rollers to the widest setting and begin to feed the dough through.

As the flattened piece of dough emerges, catch it gently so it doesn't tear. Then fold the dough into thirds (like an envelope), flatten it slightly again and very lightly dust it with flour to prevent it from sticking. Repeat this process 5 times on the first setting.

Once done, set the rollers to the next-thinnest setting and repeat the folding and rolling process 6 times. If the dough feels sticky, as you roll it, very lightly dust it with flour.

At the third setting, repeat the process only 3 times. Now, without folding the dough, roll it once through each of the progressively-thinner settings. Do not pull the sheets of pasta out of the machine; rather, support them lightly underneath as they emerge. If the pasta sheet becomes too long to work with easily, you can cut it in half. Then continue to roll the pieces of dough until you have reached the thinnest setting.

When finished, the pasta sheets should be very thin and smooth. Place the sheets onto a lightly-floured surface to air dry for about 10 minutes.

Next, cut each sheet into approximately 5" -inch squares and cover with a clean, damp cloth.

Step 6: Rolling the Pasta Dough

- all-purpose flour (for dusting)

Cooking the Pasta Sheets

To cook the pasta, bring 6 quarts of water to a boil and then add the salt. Set up an ice bath next to the stovetop and add the oil to the ice bath.

Place 6 or 7 pieces of pasta into the boiling water. Cook until tender, about 1 to 2 minutes. Once cooked, gently lift the sheets out of the water with a spider.

Immediately plunge them into the ice bath to cool. Separate any folded noodles, so they cool quickly and don't stick together. Remove the noodles from the ice bath, drain and lay flat on clean kitchen towels.

Continue to cook the remaining pasta, replenishing the ice bath with more ice as it melts. Once all of the noodles are cooked, you are ready to begin assembling the lasagne.

Step 7: Cooking the Pasta Sheets

- 6 L/qt cold water
- 2 tbsp sea salt
- ice (for ice bath)
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

Assembling the Lasagne

Before assembling the lasagne, preheat your oven to 375° degrees Fahrenheit.

Grate the Parmigiano-Reggiano into a bowl and set aside. Then gather the besciamella and give it a good stir to make sure it is nice and smooth. Have the ragu and your lasagne pan ready.

To begin assembling, spread a layer of ragu over the bottom of the pan and top with a bit of the cheese. Then add a layer of pasta. It is okay if the noodles overlap slightly. Add a thin layer of besciamella, spreading it out slightly. Add another layer of ragu. Because the pasta is so delicate and thin, you can create many layers; so, don't worry about every spot being covered with filling. Sprinkle with the cheese and add another layer of pasta. Continue and repeat the same process, layering the noodles, besciamella, ragu and then the cheese. The last layer should be a layer of noodles topped with a generous coating of besciamella. Spread the besciamella out to cover the edges so the noodles don't dry out during baking.

Sprinkle with a bit more cheese and bake for approximately 45 minutes. When done, the edges and top should be slightly browned and the sauces should be bubbling. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving and enjoy one of the best lasagne's you'll ever have.

Step 8: Assembling the Lasagne

- 8 oz Parmigiano-Reggiano