

# 5 SIMPLE & AMAZING PASTA RECIPES

Enjoy these simple pasta recipes that are simply delicious!

BY SIMPLEITALIANCOOKING.COM



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# INTRODUCTION

Ciao!

I hope you enjoy these Italian pasta recipes! It's my desire to help bring some joy back into cooking through simple Italian recipes that are simply delicious!

Grazie é ciao!

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# Stuffed Shells with Spinach

This recipe is perfect for family dinners and leftovers can be easily frozen for later.

Prep time (including rising time): 30 min    Cook Time: 30 min    Servings: 6 people

## Ingredients

- 1 16 oz. box of jumbo pasta shells
- 4-5 cups pasta sauce (32-40oz)
- 2 cups ricotta cheese
- ½ cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- ¼ cup Romano or Parmesan cheese
- 1 bag thawed and drained frozen chopped spinach

## Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350F.
2. In a large pot, boil the shells until almost done. About 3/4 the recommended cooking time (approx 7 min.).
3. Drain and cool with cold water.
4. Mix the cheeses and spinach in a medium bowl.
5. Fill each shell with the mixture.
6. In a baking dish spread a heavy layer of sauce.
7. Add the stuffed shells (open side up), cover liberally with sauce, and sprinkle remaining mozzarella cheese on top.
8. Cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes or until fully cooked and sauce is boiling.
9. Remove from oven and enjoy!

## Recipe Notes

1. If you run out of room in your baking dish, layer the shells but spread a layer of sauce on top before adding the second layer of shells.
2. Don't worry about using exact measurements with the cheese. There is no one set method or recipe. Use what you have.
3. Serve with a nice salad, or Italian green beans, and some garlic bread.

# Meatless Lasagna

A simple and classic meatless pasta recipe for the family.

Prep Time: 20 minutes   Cook Time: 45 min.   Servings: 8 servings

## Ingredients

- 1 box lasagna noodles
- 2 lbs ricotta cheese
- 48 oz. pasta sauce (or 6 cups)
- 6-8 oz shredded mozzarella
- 3/4 cup grated Romano cheese
- 1/4 cup dried parsley flakes or 1/2 cup fresh chopped parsley

## Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375F.
2. In a large pot, boil the noodles with a tablespoon of olive oil, until almost done. About 3/4 the recommended cooking time (approx 7 min.).
3. Meanwhile in a separate large bowl mix the parsley, ricotta, and 3/4 of the mozzarella cheese, and romano cheese.
4. When noodles are done, drain and rinse with cool water to prevent any further cooking. See tip below.
5. In 9x13 baking dish spread a layer of sauce.
6. Lay a layer of noodles, then sauce, then cheese.
7. Repeat ending with a layer of noodles and top with sauce making sure to cover all exposed noodles.
8. Cover with foil (shiny side down) and bake for 35 -45 minutes until heated through and sauce is bubbling from below.
9. Sprinkle remaining mozzarella cheese on top and bake for 5 or 10 minutes until cheese is melted.

## Recipe Notes

- The olive oil in the water is not for flavor. It is to help prevent the noodles from sticking together as much when you take them out of the water and drain. You can cover the noodles with cold water so they are not so hot to the touch when you are ready to assemble.
- I have made this recipe without mozzarella cheese, using Romano and Ricotta only.
- If you have remaining unused lasagna noodles and filling, create lasagna rolls by using the broken noodles to wrap around the filling. Kind of like manicotti. Bake in a smaller baking dish.
- Serve with a nice salad, or Italian green beans, and some garlic bread.

# Baked Italian Orzo & Mushroom Casserole

A wonderful casserole recipe full of Italian flavor.

Prep Time: 20 min Cook Time: 30 min. Servings: 6

## Ingredients

- 16 oz orzo pasta
- 3 1/2 cups chicken or veggie broth
- 1 onion chopped
- 8 oz chopped mushrooms
- 1/3 cup peas
- 1/4 cup milk or 1/2 and 1/2
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 1/2 cup shredded mozzarella or Italian cheese mix
- 3 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 Tablespoons butter
- 1/4 cup breadcrumbs
- 2 Tablespoons grated Romano cheese

## Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400F.
2. Bring broth and/or water to a boil and cook the orzo. Do not drain.
3. In a large saucepan heat olive oil and butter until melted over medium heat.
4. Add onions and saute until tender about 4 minutes.
5. Add in the mushrooms and cook for about 5 minutes.
6. Add in the peas and wine and cook down until wine is 1/2 gone. About 5 minutes.
7. Pour the orzo and remaining liquid into the saucepan and mix well.
8. Add in the cheese and mix again.
9. Pour into a greased baking dish.
10. Mix the Romano cheese and breadcrumbs together and sprinkle on top.
11. Bake uncovered for approximately 20 minutes or until the breadcrumbs are golden brown.

## Recipe Notes

- If you do not have mozzarella, use an Italian shredded cheese mix. It works well. I added grated Romano to it as well. The cheese itself will give it different flavors so feel free to experiment.
- I used plain breadcrumbs but if you prefer seasoned breadcrumbs that works as well, but may change the flavor slightly.
- Serve with: Italian Green Salad, Lima Beans

# Baked Pasta

This recipe can also be prepared ahead of time for large gatherings or for meal planning.

**Prep Time:** 15 min. **Cook Time:** 35 min. **Servings:** 6

## Ingredients

- 1 lb Rigatoni pasta or other short tube pasta
- 32 oz. tomato/pasta sauce
- 15 oz. ricotta cheese
- 5 cloves chopped garlic
- 2 cups grated Romano cheese
- Pinch salt

## Instructions:

1. Bring water to a boil in a large pot
2. Add the pasta and cook for ½ the normal time
3. Drain the pasta
4. In a baking dish, place one scoop of pasta sauce on the bottom of the pan
5. Add a layer of pasta (there will only be two layers)
6. Add sauce on top of the pasta to fully cover
7. Next add a layer of ricotta, about ¾ of the cheese
8. Mix all together
9. Add the remaining pasta, then sauce, then remainder of the ricotta plus the Romano cheese.
10. Top with sauce making sure all edges are covered with sauce
11. Mix all together again, sprinkling the garlic around
12. Cover the pan with foil and bake at 375F for 25-35 minutes

## Recipe Notes

- You can add in meat to this recipe, but make sure it is already cooked
- If preparing ahead of time, you can store in the freezer. Remove the day before use and let thaw. Then bake in the oven covered until heated through.
- Italian green salad, lima beans, Italian bread, chicken dishes

# Italian Pasta with Peas

This is a quick recipe that is on the table in less than 30 minutes!

**Prep Time:** 10 min. **Cook Time:** 10 min. **Servings:** 6

## Ingredients

- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup frozen peas
- 2 cloves of garlic sliced thin
- linguine or other pasta -preferably long. Enough for 6 servings.

## Instructions:

1. In medium saucepan, bring water to a boil
2. In a large frying pan (enough to hold the pasta later), over med-high heat add frozen peas, and garlic and add enough water to cover slightly
3. When water is about gone, lower heat to low and add in the olive oil and stir
4. Keep a watchful eye, making sure not to burn the garlic. If needed add some water or more olive oil
5. Meanwhile, add the pasta to the boiling water and cook until al dente
6. When pasta is finished, transfer the pasta to the frying pan and toss so the pasta is coated with the olive oil making sure to keep aside about a 1/2 cup or so of the pasta water (important).
7. Serve the pasta and top with grated Italian cheese (preferably Romano).
8. Add the extra pasta water if the pasta is too dry.

## Recipe Notes

- Serve with a salad and garlic bread