

Turkey, Tomato And Mozzarella Lasagne

I usually find lasagna a bit heavy with all the cheeses & meats, however by using ground turkey, it's much lighter and very delicious. Lasagne makes a great dish for entertaining; it can be made ahead and baked when needed. I like to use imported Italian plum tomatoes, because the tomatoes are so good and the juices nice & thick.

Makes 8 Servings

For the Sauce:

2 large onions, chopped
4 large garlic cloves, minced
2 Tbsp. EVO
1 ½ lbs. ground turkey
2 carrots, chopped into 1/8" dice
1 large red bell pepper, chopped fine
1 (28oz.) tin Italian plum tomatoes, diced
1 ½ cups dry red wine
1 tsp. dried basil, crumbled, or 1 Tbsp. fresh basil, chopped
¾ tsp. dried thyme, or 2 tsp. fresh thyme
¼ tsp. pepperoncino (dried red pepper flakes)
1/8 tsp. allspice
4 Tbsp. chopped flat-leaf parsley

For the Lasagna:

15 oz. ricotta cheese
1 large egg, beaten lightly
2 green onions, chopped
12 sheets of no-boil lasagna pasta (Barilla's is quite good), 7x3 ½" sheets
12 oz. mozzarella, grated (you could use part skim)
¼ cup freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano

In a heavy skillet, cook the onions & ¾ of the minced garlic in EVO over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally, until the onions are softened. Add the turkey, carrots & bell pepper & cook, stirring to break up turkey lumps with a fork, until carrots are barely tender. Stir in the tomatoes, wine, herbs, spices, salt & pepper to taste; simmer uncovered, 25 minutes. Stir in remaining garlic & simmer a further 5 minutes. (You can make the sauce up to 3 days ahead; cool, cover & chill.

Preheat oven to 375F

In a bowl stir together the ricotta, egg, green onions; add salt & pepper to taste.

Spread about 1 cup of the sauce into a well-greased 13 x 9" baking dish & cover with 3 lasagne sheets, making sure they do not touch each other. Divide the remaining sauce into quarters then spread a quarter of the sauce over the pasta. Drop 1/3 of the ricotta mixture by spoonful's onto the sauce & gently spread with the back of a spoon, it won't cover the whole surface. Sprinkle ¼ of the mozzarella over ricotta & make 2 more layers in the same way, beginning & ending with pasta. Spread remaining sauce evenly over top, making sure pasta is completely covered; sprinkle with Parmigiano & remaining mozzarella.

Place a piece of baking parchment over the lasagna, then cover the whole dish tightly with foil. (Using the baking parchment is a great trick & keeps the cheese from sticking). Place in the oven for 30 minutes. Remove foil & parchment and bake approximately 10 minutes more, or until top is bubbling & golden. Let lasagna stand for 10 - 15 minutes before cutting & serving.