

RECIPE OF THE MONTH!

Lasagna Soup



This recipe came to me from my cousin, and it has quickly made it onto my favorites list. And why not? It's almost lasagna, but quicker and easier. It is very easily tweaked to accommodate your taste preferences (*add this, leave out that...*), and you can even choose between using your slow cooker or the stove top.



Ingredients:

- 1 lb lean ground beef
- 1 large onion diced
- 2-4 cloves of garlic minced
- 1 can 28 oz crushed tomatoes, undrained
- 1 can 15 oz tomato sauce
- 1 can 14.5 oz diced tomatoes
- 32 oz low sodium beef broth
- 1 red bell pepper diced
- 1 green bell pepper diced
- 2 cups fresh mushrooms, sliced thick
- 2 teaspoons dried basil leaves
- 2 teaspoons dried parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 8 lasagna noodles, broken into bite size pieces
- 2 cups chopped fresh spinach (optional)

Toppings:

- Mozzarella Cheese
- Ricotta Cheese
- Parmesan Cheese
- Fresh Basil and Parsley

Directions:

- Brown and drain the ground beef.
- Place beef in **slow cooker*** and add all remaining ingredients except pasta and spinach.
- Cook on low for 7-8 hours or high for 3-4 hours.
- Break lasagna noodles into bite size pieces, and cook al dente, according to package directions.
- Stir in cooked pasta and spinach.
- Cook for an additional 10-15 minutes on high.
- Serve with optional toppings.

* **Stove top** directions: Brown meat as directed, add other ingredients and simmer on low 30-45 minutes. Cook pasta as directed above, stir cooked pasta and spinach and simmer an additional 3-5 minutes.

Susan's Notes:

- There is so much you can do to play with this recipe. I used part ground beef and part Italian sausage for the meat. Also, I use Cottage Cheese in place of the Ricotta, as I am not a fan of ricotta. Of course, other pastas can be substituted for the lasagna noodles, but they are in the spirit of the recipe and easy to spear.