

Cooking With Rania

KDKA Pittsburgh Today Live 2/20/2013

Pasta, Beef and Custard Pie

INGREDIENTS

Tomato Meat Sauce:

3 tablespoons good olive oil
1½ cups chopped yellow onion
2 pounds lean ground beef
½ cup dry red wine
3 large cloves minced garlic
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon dried oregano
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
Pinch of cayenne pepper
1 can (28 ounces) crushed tomatoes in puree
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 pound Macaroni Pastitsio* #2 or #3 or Penne or Ziti
Béchamel Sauce (can be made ahead ~ see recipe below):

1 large egg + 2 large yolks
¾ cup freshly grated Parmesan or Kefalotyri* cheese
¼ teaspoon nutmeg

DIRECTIONS

For the Tomato Meat sauce:

Heat the olive oil over medium-high heat in a large pot. Add the onion and sauté for 5 minutes. Add the beef, and sauté over medium heat for 8 to 10 minutes, until it's no longer pink, crumbling it with the back of wooden spoon. Drain off any excess liquid, add the wine, and cook for 2 more minutes. Add the garlic, cinnamon, oregano, nutmeg, and cayenne, and continue cooking over medium heat for 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes, 2 teaspoons salt and pepper to taste and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 40 to 45 minutes. Set aside.

Meanwhile, make the béchamel sauce (note that the béchamel sauce can be made ahead and refrigerated – see recipe note below)

Cook the pasta in a large pot of boiling water until al dente. Don't over-cook because the pasta will later be baked. Drain, toss with a small amount of olive oil to prevent sticking and set aside.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

Assembly:

Whisk the béchamel in a large bowl until smooth. Whisk in the egg, egg yolks and cheese along with ¼ teaspoon nutmeg and salt to taste, to form a custard. Mix the pasta with 1 cup of the custard. Spread half of the pasta into an even layer on the bottom of a greased 13 x 10 x 2 ½ - inch baking dish. Top with all of the meat and with the back of a wooden spoon or large rubber
(continued on next page)

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Pasta, Beef and Custard Pie *(cont.)*

DIRECTIONS *(cont.)*

spatula; press the meat into an even layer. Top with remaining pasta. Dollop the remaining custard on top and spread evenly. Place the baking dish on a parchment lined half sheet pan. Bake for 45 minutes, until golden brown and bubbly. Set aside for 45 minutes before slicing.

Béchamel

Ingredients

- 8 ounces (2 sticks) unsalted butter
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- 8 cups whole milk – warmed
- Sea salt to taste

Directions

In a large, heavy pot, melt the butter over medium-low heat. Whisk in the flour and whisk constantly just until the mixture begins to darken and smells nutty. Add 2 cups of milk to the pot and whisk until smooth. Add another 2 cups and whisk until smooth. Whisk in the remaining 4 cups of milk along with salt to taste. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low and cook gently for 20 minutes, stirring frequently to avoid from burning. Scrape the sides of the pot from time to time, as well.

Transfer the sauce to a large bowl and cover loosely with plastic wrap. Allow to cool and then cover tightly and refrigerate for up to 2 days. Proceed with recipe as directly above.

*Macaroni Pastitsio and Kefalotyri cheese can be found in specialty Greek grocery stores