

DIVINE PASTICHIO

Chef Vivian Peterson

DIVINE

Meat Sauce

Ingredients:

Serves: 8

1 T butter
2 lbs. ground beef
1 small onion, chopped finely
1 clove garlic
2 tsp. salt
½ tsp. pepper
1 T dried Greek oregano and/or fresh chopped parsley
½ cup white wine
1 can (14 oz.) diced tomatoes
1 small can tomato paste
2 egg whites

Bechamel Sauce

Ingredients:

½ cup butter
¾ cup flour
4 cups hot milk
Salt and pepper
Nutmeg
1 cup grated cheese
2 eggs and 2 egg yolks

Noodles

Ingredients:

1 lb. pasticcio (macaroni) noodles
1 T salt
2 T butter
1 cup grated cheese

Method:

For the Meat Sauce:

Heat butter in pan and sauté the onions, garlic and meat until browned. Add remaining ingredients except egg whites. Be generous with the spices and taste regularly. Be sure there is enough salt to bring out the flavor. I always add quite a bit more than the recipe calls for. Let the sauce simmer for 10-15 minutes. Turn off and stir until slightly cooled. Stir in egg whites. (Save the yolks for the béchamel). You do not want the sauce so hot that it cooks the egg whites immediately. They should be incorporated.

For the Bechamel:

Melt butter in heavy saucepan. Add the flour and whisk for about one minute. Add the milk all at once and whisk until sauce is thickened and smooth. I usually heat the milk in another pan or in the microwave before adding. That and a quality, even heating sauce pan help make the best sauce. Add salt pepper and nutmeg to taste. I add quite a healthy dose of each, probably at least ½-1 teaspoon. Remove from heat and stir in eggs and cheese. A sharper white cheese works well, like Parmesan or Asagio. I do not think Mozzarella has enough flavor.

For the noodles:

Bring water to a boil with salt. Cook noodles until tender but slightly firm, drain very well and return to pan. Stir in butter.

Assembly:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter a large, deep pan (lasagna pan works well). You can see by the amount of ingredients you have, this makes a large dish and serves at least 8 people. Put half the noodles in the pan and sprinkle with ½ cup of cheese. Top the noodles with the meat sauce. Place the rest of the noodles on the meat sauce. Pour the béchamel over the top. Sprinkle on the remaining ½ cup cheese. Some of the noodles will be sticking through the top, which is good because they get brown and crunchy in the oven. Bake for approximately one hour or until top is lightly browned. Remove from the oven and let sit at least 15 minutes before cutting and serving.

