



Weekly Recipe Challenge

Slow-Cooker Vegetarian Lasagna (courtesy of EatingWell)

Sure, the slow cooker's great for stews and soups, but it also happens to make a mean lasagna! In this ingenious slow-cooker recipe, all you have to do is chop your veggies, then layer the ingredients (raw) into the crockpot. Serve with: Garlic bread and a green salad. (Requires: 6-quart, or larger, slow cooker)

8 servings (3 Carbohydrate Serving) | **Active Time:** 30 minutes | **Total Time:** 2 hours on High or 4 hours on Low



Ingredients

- 1 large egg
- 1 15- to 16-ounce container part-skim ricotta
- 1 5-ounce package baby spinach, coarsely chopped
- 3 large or 4 small Portobello mushroom caps, gills removed (see Tip), halved and thinly sliced
- 1 small zucchini, quartered lengthwise and thinly sliced
- 1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes
- 1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- Pinch of crushed red pepper (optional)
- 15 whole-wheat lasagna noodles (about 12 ounces), uncooked
- 3 cups shredded part-skim mozzarella, divided

Tip: The dark gills found on the underside of a Portobello mushroom cap are edible, but can turn a dish an unappealing gray color. If you like, gently scrape the gills off with a spoon.



Instructions

1. Combine egg, ricotta, spinach, mushrooms and zucchini in a large bowl.
2. Combine crushed and diced tomatoes and their juice, garlic and crushed red pepper (if using) in a medium bowl.
3. Coat slow cooker with cooking spray.
4. Spread 1 1/2 cups of the tomato mixture in cooker. Arrange 5 noodles over the sauce, overlapping them slightly and breaking into pieces to cover as much of the sauce as possible.
5. Spread half of the ricotta-vegetable mixture over the noodles and firmly pat down, then spoon on 1 1/2 cups sauce and sprinkle with 1 cup mozzarella.
6. Repeat the layering one more time, starting with noodles. Top with a third layer of noodles. Evenly spread the remaining tomato sauce over the noodles.
7. Set aside the remaining 1 cup mozzarella in the refrigerator.
8. Put the lid on the slow cooker and cook on High for 2 hours or on Low for 4 hours.
9. Turn off the slow cooker, sprinkle the reserved mozzarella on the lasagna, cover and let stand for 10 minutes to melt the cheese.



Nutritional Information (per serving) Exchanges: 2 starch, 2 vegetable, 2 1/2 medium-fat meat

- **Calories** 414
- **Carbohydrates** 48g (Fiber 7g)
- **Cholesterol** 63mg
- **Fat** 14g (Saturated Fat, 8g; 4g Monounsaturated)
- **Sodium** 641mg
- **Potassium** 829mg
- **Protein** 28g

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