

The Best Lasagna Soup



Photo by jamie, stock.adobe.com

INGREDIENTS

Meat and Protein:

- 0.5 pound (226 grams) ground beef
- 8 ounces (226 grams) shredded Mozzarella
- 0.5 cup (50 grams) Parmesan cheese, grated

Vegetables and Aromatics:

- 1 chopped onion
- 2 minced garlic cloves
- 0.25 cup (15 grams) chopped fresh basil (optional)

Seasonings, Liquids, and Other

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 0.5 teaspoon oregano
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 2 teaspoons dried parsley
- 0.5 teaspoon salt
- 0.5 teaspoon black pepper
- 0.5 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 24-ounce (680 grams) jar spaghetti sauce
- 6 cups (1.4 liters) chicken broth
- 0.5 cup (120 milliliters) heavy cream
- 8 ounces (226 grams) lasagna noodles, broken into pieces

NOTE

You can substitute your protein to pork, chicken or leave it out if you would like. The heavy cream can be omitted, but it adds a decadence to the soup. Adjust the flavors by adding more or less spices. If you are using homemade spaghetti sauce, you may need to taste the soup before you spice it up. The soup can be made in the crockpot as well, be sure to brown meat before adding it in. Add the noodles just before serving, cooking until soft.

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large pot, warm olive oil over medium heat until shimmering. Sauté diced onions until translucent and soft, approximately 5-7 minutes. Add minced garlic and cook for an additional 30-45 seconds, releasing its aromatic essence without scorching.
2. Introduce ground beef to the pot, incorporating oregano, basil, parsley, salt, black pepper, and red pepper flakes. Break meat into small crumbles while cooking until completely browned and no pink remains. Carefully drain excess fat to prevent greasy consistency.
3. Pour tomato sauce, chicken broth, and heavy cream into the pot. Stir ingredients thoroughly, creating a uniform liquid base that appears slightly thin but will thicken during cooking.
4. Elevate heat to generate a gentle boil, then carefully add broken lasagna noodles. Reduce temperature to medium and simmer for 12-14 minutes, stirring periodically to prevent noodles from adhering to pot bottom. Ensure noodles reach perfect tenderness.
5. Remove pot from heat source. Sprinkle Parmesan and mozzarella cheese into soup, stirring until completely melted and integrated, transforming the liquid into a rich, creamy texture.
6. Portion soup into serving bowls. Optional: Garnish with fresh basil leaves for a vibrant, aromatic finishing touch that enhances visual appeal and flavor profile.

Recipe source: Adapted from boilandbroil.com



Green Goddess Salad



INGREDIENTS

Salad:

- 1 head of green leaf, red leaf or iceberg lettuce, chopped (4-5 cups)
- ½ cup diced green pepper
- 1 cup diced cucumber
- ½ cup halved cherry tomatoes
- 1/3 cup diced red onion (or can use green onions)
- ¼ cup unsalted sunflower seeds (can use sliced almonds)
- 1 avocado, diced or sliced

Dressing:

- 1 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon honey
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 ½ cups fresh herbs (parsley, cilantro, chives, basil, tarragon, and or dill)

NOTE

You can add a protein to the salad and make it a stand alone meal. If you like some spice, add some jalapenos to the dressing. Add some cheese for an added creaminess. If you aren't going to eat all of the salad in one setting, keep the dressing on the side and add it individually. The avocados will brown a bit, you may want to add some to individual's salads, if you won't be finishing the salad at your meal.

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Prepare the dressing:** In a small food processor or blender, combine the Greek yogurt, lemon juice, olive oil, Dijon mustard, honey, salt, garlic powder and fresh herbs. Blend until smooth.
- 2. Assemble the salad:** In a large bowl, combine the chopped lettuce, diced green pepper, diced cucumber, halved cherry tomatoes, diced red onion, sunflower seeds, and avocado.
- 3. Dress the salad:** Pour the dressing over the salad and toss gently to combine, ensuring all the ingredients are evenly coated.
- 4. Serve:** Serve immediately or refrigerate up to 2 hours before serving.

Recipe source: Adapted from lisarecipe.com



Frozen Apples



Photo by Ludmila Smite, stock.adobe.com

Have you seen the viral trend for shaved frozen fruit? I gave in and tried it with peaches this summer and let me tell you, WOW! So why not capture those fall flavors in some delicious apples. You will need to select your favorite apple, wash and freeze it. I found it easiest to core the apple before freezing it. That way, you don't need to worry about the core and seeds when you are shaving it. I used my Food, Fun, 4-H zester and it worked beautifully. Eat the shaved apple just as it is, top with a little whipped cream, caramel sauce and crushed graham crackers. Or a little heavy cream and your favorite granola. Be sure and watch your fingers when you are grating, it is very easy to lose your grip on the frozen fruit! Your food processor may be an option to grate the apples as well. Let us know what your favorite combination is! This is a great way to capture those fall fruits at the peak of ripeness.



Be sure to check out Ready, Set, Explore!
Another family fun program from the
University of Wyoming Extension!



How it works!

1. Register once to participate at: https://bit.ly/readysetexplore_registration
2. Upon registering, you'll receive a link to the full Ready, Set, Explore! packet that includes activities and extras for all months (Oct–May).
3. Choose to do 4 or more of the activities listed for each month.
4. Submit monthly completion form and share pictures from your adventures! https://bit.ly/readysetexplore_completion

Extras!

The fun doesn't stop there! Each month participants will also be sent the following information that they are encouraged to do, but not required:

- Nature Journaling Prompt
- Vibrant Health Tip
- Snack Idea
- Leave No Trace Tip
- Natural Resource Handout

READY, SET, EXPLORE!

OCTOBER 2025 - General Activities List

1. Visit a pumpkin patch and get a picture with your favorite pumpkin.
2. Carve a Pumpkin.
3. Walk in Nature and Collect three distinct kinds of fallen leaves and see if you can identify them on <https://www.arbor-day.org/trees/whattree/whattree.cfm?ItemID=W6A>.
4. See if you can find a pumpkin at a store or pumpkin patch that is not orange and research what variety it is.
5. Collect 5 rocks from various locations. (4-H Natural Resources Level 1 Step into Nature) page 18
 1. Identify if they are Igneous, Sedimentary, or Metamorphic:
 2. Identify what minerals are present:
 3. Hardness of Rock:
 4. Grains visible:
 5. How rock breaks up:
 6. Diagram:
6. Outdoor Survival Skill – Knot Tying (Camping Adventures Level 2) page 14
 - Bowline Knot
 - Honda Knot
 - Double Half Hitch
 - Fisherman
 - Square Knot
 - Sheet Bend
 - Figure Eight Knot
 - Clove Hitch
7. Make a pinecone into a bird feeder- Link to steps
8. Go for a fall photography scavenger hunt and look for the following:
 - A yellow leaf
 - A red leaf
 - An orange leaf
 - A bird in a tree
 - A leaf pile
 - Someone peaking out from behind a tree
 - A flower
 - A pumpkin
9. Write the word “October” with natural things you find on the ground (ex. Leaves, sticks, pinecones, acorns, feathers, etc.) But make sure they are already on the ground! Take a picture and when you're done, scatter your natural things back around.
10. What Changed? Play this game inside or outside. Have the players leave the area and while they are gone, change three things. For example, turn a pillow over or move a flower pot or decoration. Once they return, the players will try to spot what has changed. the first person to name the 3 differences becomes the person to change the objects.
11. Make a Fall Leaf Mobile <https://www.soul-flower.com/blog/diy-autumn-leaf-mobile/>
12. Prize Pumkin Decorating <https://www.rd.com/list/how-to-decorate-a-pumpkin-without-carving/>
13. Squirrel Awareness Month: Did you know squirrels are one of the biggest contributors to planting trees? Squirrels forget where they bury their treasure, leading to new growth in our nation's forests. Get outside this month and watch these little furry tree planters.
14. October 10th is World Mental Health Day: Take care of yourself and enjoy outdoor time in the crisp, fresh Wyoming air.
15. Visit Apple Orchard
16. Make a Scare Crow
17. Visit a Corn Maze
18. Visit or Volunteer at a local Farmer's Market
19. Practice plein air artwork with your favorite artistic medium
20. Go on a bike ride