

Marry Me Lasagne

Lasagne with Ricotta Cheese, Mozzarella Cheese, and Basil



Maybe you want to marry him, but aren't an Engagement Chicken kind of girl. Why not ask *him*? Your inspiration: Hillary Seitz, a Los Angeles screenwriter who had been with her boyfriend for seven years when she decided to propose. "He'd wanted to get married all along; I was the one who'd resisted," explained Hillary. "I wanted a proposal that said thanks for hanging in there and having faith in me." So Hillary went to a paint-your-own pottery shop and painted two plates: one with the phrase "Charlie, will you marry me?" and the other with "Please say yes." Hillary took her plates to a favorite restaurant, asked them to serve, and watched as Charlie uncovered the proposal. Naturally, he *did* say yes. Want to try it yourself? Consider this layers-of-love lasagne—big enough, incidentally, to cover the whole plate. Message optional!

Serves 4 to 6

3 cups Marinara Sauce (recipe follows;
in a pinch, use your favorite jarred
red sauce)
8 ounces uncooked lasagne noodles
One 15- to 16-ounce container whole
or part-skim ricotta cheese
3 large eggs
2 cups shredded fresh mozzarella
cheese (8 ounces)
½ cup freshly grated Parmigiano-
Reggiano cheese
Basil leaves, finely chopped, for
garnish

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Prepare the marinara sauce. While the sauce is simmering, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Drop in the lasagne noodles one at a time and cook over high heat, stirring occasionally, until just al dente, around 5 minutes. Drain the noodles in a colander and set them aside.

2. In a medium bowl, combine the ricotta and eggs. Spread 1 cup marinara sauce in the bottom of a 9- by 13-inch baking dish. Top with a layer of lasagne noodles, followed by half the ricotta mixture.

[CONTINUED]

3. Repeat with a second layer of marinara, noodles, and ricotta mixture and top with a third layer of noodles. Spread $\frac{3}{4}$ cup marinara sauce on the noodles (reserving $\frac{1}{4}$ cup to drizzle over each lasagne slice when you serve it). Sprinkle with the mozzarella and Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese.

4. Bake the lasagne for about 1 hour, or until the top is golden, the filling is bubbling around the edges, and the noodles are tender when pierced with a sharp knife. Remove from the oven and let cool for 15 minutes before serving. Cut the lasagne into thick slices, arrange on plates, drizzle with the remaining marinara sauce, and serve, garnished with basil.

MARINARA SAUCE

1. In a large saucepan, cook the garlic in the olive oil over moderate heat until golden, about 30 seconds.

2. Turn the heat up to high; add the tomatoes, a large pinch each of salt and pepper, and the red pepper flakes. Bring to a simmer, then turn the heat down to moderately low. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the sauce is thick, 15 to 20 minutes.

3. Add the butter and basil to the saucepan, stirring to melt the butter. Add salt and pepper to taste.

glamour girl tip

This lasagne recipe leaves plenty of room for personalization. Play around with other fillings, adding a layer of sautéed mushrooms, chopped sautéed spinach leaves, or even some cooked crumbled sausage.

5 large garlic cloves, thinly sliced
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil
Two 28-ounce cans whole tomatoes
(preferably San Marzano), drained
and chopped
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon red pepper flakes
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
10 basil leaves, torn into pieces