

Mister Charlie

This is one of those old-standby recipes - good for a crowd, make ahead, not too awful for calories & fat. Just plain good.

From an old Navy Wives cookbook, circa 1965.



This makes a big gooey, mushy mixture, but as it bakes it firms up some. You can alter the amount of water you add - the original recipe said to add 4-5 cans (from the tomato paste) of water. I usually add about 4 cans, which should be 24 ounces. You can also add canned, drained tomatoes to this. Ricotta can be substituted for the cottage cheese too. Originally this recipe called for ground beef, but I like the flavor of the sausage better.

Servings: 12

Preparation Time: 45 minutes

Start to Finish Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

1. Heat large skillet (12 inch), adding olive oil. Add diced onion and cook while preparing other ingredients. Add the Italian sausage (mashed into small pieces) and continue cooking until all the pink is gone.
2. Add the garlic, herbs and mushrooms, then add the tomato paste and water. Cook for about 15 minutes until well blended. Taste for seasoning (salt and pepper). Set aside to cool slightly. Preheat oven to 350°.
3. Meanwhile, cook pasta until it's just under-done. Drain.
4. Into a very large bowl add the pasta, cottage cheese, then add the slightly cooled meat mixture. Prepare the cheese - about 1/3 of it should be in thin slices, the remainder should be shredded. I freeze the big ball of mozzarella cheese for about 20 minutes to make it easier to grate. Pour into two 9 x 13 pans, or a combination of other types. Place cheese slices on top. Bake about 20 minutes until the cheese is bubbly.

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 1/2 pounds Italian sausage
1 whole onion, minced
2 cloves garlic, minced
12 ounces tomato paste
8 ounces fresh mushrooms, sliced
24 ounces water
1 tablespoon Italian seasoning, or oregano, basil, thyme combination
1 pound cottage cheese
1/2 pound cheddar cheese, grated
1/2 pound Mozzarella cheese, grated and sliced both
1 pound pasta, your choice of type (penne rigate, macaroni)
1/2 cup parsley, chopped

Serving Ideas: You need nothing with this except a crispy green salad.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 561 Calories; 33g Fat (52.3% calories from fat); 29g Protein; 38g Carbohydrate; 3g Dietary Fiber; 83mg Cholesterol; 995mg Sodium.
Exchanges: 2 Grain(Starch); 3 Lean Meat; 1 1/2 Vegetable; 4 1/2 Fat.