

Lasagna Tonight!

Ten slices of comfort:
an Italian classic
made better

BY KATIE WEBSTER

"I often say that Italians are *campanilisti*," says Anna Teresa Callen in *Food and Memories of Abruzzo*. "It means that we are attached to our *campanile*, or local bell tower—and often, so is the food." She uses, as an example, lasagna, which varies from town to town, in some places ponderously rich, in other regions fresh-tasting and light—but always lovingly hand-layered, with a complex melding of tastes and textures. Here is a version that EATINGWELL staff have rallied around, nutritionally updated but still authentic and wonderfully satisfying.

Mushroom, Sausage & Spinach Lasagna

Healthy **X** Weight High **↑** Fiber

PREP TIME: 30 MINUTES | **START TO FINISH:**

2 HOURS | **TO MAKE AHEAD:** Prepare through
Step 5 up to 1 day ahead.

- 8 ounces lasagna noodles, preferably whole-wheat (see Note, page 76)
- 1 pound lean spicy Italian turkey sausage, casings removed (see Variation)
- 4 cups sliced mushrooms (10 ounces)
- ¼ cup water
- 1 pound frozen spinach, thawed
- 1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes, preferably chunky
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil
- Salt & freshly ground pepper to taste
- 1 pound part-skim ricotta cheese (2 cups)
- 8 ounces part-skim mozzarella cheese, shredded (about 2 cups), divided

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 9-by-13-inch glass baking dish with cooking spray. Put a large pot of water on to boil.

2. Cook noodles in the boiling water until not quite al dente, about 2 minutes less than the package directions. Drain; return the noodles to the pot, cover with cool water and set aside.

3. Coat a large nonstick skillet with cooking spray and heat over medium-high heat. Add sausage and cook, crumbling with a wooden spoon, until browned, about 4 minutes. Add mushrooms and water; cook, stirring occasionally and crumbling the sausage more, until the sausage is cooked through, the water has evaporated and the mushrooms are tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Squeeze spinach to remove excess water, then stir into the pan; remove from heat.

4. Mix tomatoes with basil, salt and pepper in a medium bowl.

5. To assemble lasagna: Spread ½ cup of the tomatoes in the prepared baking dish. Arrange a layer of noodles on top, trimming to fit if necessary. Evenly dollop half the ricotta over the noodles. Top with half the sausage mixture, one-third of the remaining tomatoes and one-third

of the mozzarella. Continue with another layer of noodles, the remaining ricotta, the remaining sausage, half the remaining tomatoes and half the remaining mozzarella. Top with a third layer of noodles and the remaining tomatoes.

6. Cover the lasagna with foil and bake until bubbling and heated through, 1 hour to 1 hour 10 minutes. Remove the foil and sprinkle the remaining mozzarella on the lasagna. Return to the oven and bake until the cheese is just melted but not browned, 8 to 10 minutes. Let rest for 10 minutes before serving.

MAKES 10 SERVINGS.

PER SERVING: 316 CALORIES; 13 G FAT (6 G SAT, 2 G MONO); 59 MG CHOLESTEROL; 28 G CARBOHYDRATE; 26 G PROTEIN; 6 G FIBER; 681 MG SODIUM.

NUTRITION BONUS: Vitamin A (90% DAILY VALUE), Calcium (35% DV), Folate (15% DV).

VARIATION: For vegetarians, use a sausage-style soy product, such as Gimme Lean, or simply omit the sausage altogether.

