

Lasagne

Ingredients

2 tbsp. olive oil
1 large onion, finely chopped

1 stick celery, finely diced

1 large carrot, peeled and finely diced

2 garlic cloves, crushed

2 tbsp. tomato puree
1 tsp. dried oregano
500 g (1lb 2oz) beef mince
200 ml (7 fl oz (1/3 pint)) red wine
400g tin chopped tomatoes

100 ml (3 1/2 fl oz) hot beef stock

For the béchamel sauce

1 garlic clove

1 fresh bay leaf

50 g (2oz) butter

50 g (2oz) plain flour
600 ml whole milk

About 9 sheets dried egg lasagne (enough for 3 layers of pasta)

100 g (3 1/2oz) Parmesan, grated

Method

1. Gently heat the oil in a large frying pan with a lid. Fry the onion with a pinch of salt, covered, for 10min, until softened, stirring halfway through. Increase heat slightly; add celery and carrot and cook, covered, for 10min until softened. Add garlic, tomato purée and oregano; cook for 1min.
2. Season mince, break up and add to the pan, stirring until evenly browned.
3. Add the wine, increase heat and reduce by half. Pour in chopped tomatoes. Rinse tin out with hot beef stock and add to the pan. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 1hr, stirring occasionally. Remove the lid for a final 30min to reduce the sauce.
4. Heat oven to 180°C (160°C fan) mark 4. Lightly bruise garlic and bay leaf.
5. For the béchamel, melt the butter in a large, non-stick pan, and then add flour, stirring with a wooden spoon to make a smooth, thick paste. Cook, stirring, for 2min. Remove from heat and gradually whisk in milk until smooth. Add garlic and bay leaf. Return to heat, bring to boil and simmer, stirring, for about 5min until sauce has thickened and coats the back of the spoon. Off the heat, remove garlic and bay leaf and set aside.
6. In a large pan of salted, boiling water, cook pasta for 1min in batches to avoid sticking. Set aside to dry on an oiled plate.
7. Spread a third of the meat over the base of a 1.6 litre (2¾ pint) baking dish about 25.5 x 25.5cm (10 x 10in). Spoon over a quarter of the béchamel, sprinkle with 2tbsp Parmesan and place 3 sheets of pasta over in a single layer. Repeat twice. Top with the rest of the béchamel, then sprinkle over remaining cheese. Season with finely ground black pepper. Bake for 35min, until golden.