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The Ultimate Venison Lasagna Recipe

Servings

2-4 servings

Prep time

3 hours

Cooking time

40 minutes

ULTIMATE VENISON LASAGNA RECIPE INGREDIENTS

Ricotta Mixture:

- ½ gallon of whole milk (not UHT pasteurized)
- 1/3 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 large egg
- 1 cup of fresh grated Romano
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste

Tomato Sauce

- 3-4 large tomatoes. Heirloom or Beefsteak varieties work best
- 6 leaves of fresh basil

- 4-6 sprigs of fresh thyme
- 6 cloves garlic, sliced
- 1 pinch of red pepper flake per tomato
- Oil (I use grapeseed)
- 1/4 white onion, diced

Pasta

- 200 grams of all purpose flour (weighed using kitchen scale)
- 2 whole large eggs
- 10 grams of sea salt

Meat Mixture

- 1 pound ground venison
- ½ – 1 teaspoon fennel seed
- ½ – 1 teaspoon red pepper flake
- ½-1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- Salt and pepper to taste

ULTIMATE VENISON LASAGNA PREPARATION

1. We'll begin by making the ricotta because it needs to rest the longest. In a 2 quart pot (or larger) pour in the whole milk and heat on medium low until it reaches 200F using an instant read thermometer. Once it reaches temp, turn the heat off and stir in the lemon juice and 1 teaspoon of salt gently and let it sit for 10 minutes. At this point you should see most of the curds separated from the whey. If it has not separated yet, add about 1 teaspoon more lemon juice and let it sit again. If it has separated, begin to scoop it into a strainer that is lined with cheese cloth. If you don't plan on keeping the whey, you can do this in the sink and let it drain down the sink. If you plan on keeping it, place the strainer in a larger bowl so you can contain the whey. Once you had the large curds removed and into the strainer, go ahead and pour the rest of the pot into the strainer. Removing the larger curds prevents splashing of hot liquids. Let the cheese sit and drain until it reaches the consistency of your liking, anywhere from 10-60 minutes.
2. Next will be the tomato sauce. Begin by preheating your oven to Start by removing the top and core of the tomato by cutting around the outside of the top at a downward angle towards the center, making a little cup on the top of the tomato. Leave the seeds in the tomato as well. Season the tomato with salt, pepper, and red pepper flake to your taste. Top the tomato with the garlic and then the onion. Place on a baking sheet (you can foil line it) and roast for 30 minutes. Next top with the fresh basil (2 leaves each) and thyme and roast for 10 more minutes. You should see the tomato skin pulling away and some caramelization on the top.
3. Remove the tomatoes from the oven and you may either carefully peel the skin away from the tomato or you may leave it on. Either way, place the tomato into a blender or a bowl and blend them with the blender or immersion blender until a smooth sauce. Next,

- place the sauce into a sauce pan and put on medium low heat to being to reduce and thicken a little. Don't turn the heat too high as the sugars can start to burn if left too long.
4. While the tomatoes are roasting, you can make the dough for the pasta. In a large bowl, combine the flour and salt and mix together. Next, I oil the hand I'll be needing with, it helps not to get club fingers from the dough. Add the eggs and begin to mix together lightly. I use a bowl large enough for me to kneed in. Once the egg has been mixed into a lumpy mixture, begin to kneed it by using your heel to push to part of the dough forward enough to stretch it and then use your fingers to fold the dough back onto itself. Keep repeating that for about 5 minutes. If you are having trouble, find a video to watch on the technique, its much easier than reading about it. After kneading for 5 minutes, shape the dough into a small ball, wrap in plastic wrap and let sit for 30 minutes.
 5. Next, we'll make the ricotta filling mixture. Place your ricotta cheese into a mixing bowl and remove the cheese cloth. Add in the egg, Romano, parsley and mix. Add salt and pepper to taste after that.
 6. For the meat and sauce mixture. Begin by preheating a skillet over high heat and adding enough oil to coat the bottom. Take your ground venison and add in the fennel seed, red pepper flake, Italian seasoning, and salt and pepper. Mix gently to incorporate all ingredients. Take a small piece and cook it in your pan and taste it. Adjust seasonings as you see fit and then cook all the meat. Be sure to break it up into crumbles. Once browned, add your tomato sauce to the meat and cook for 2-3 minutes. Turn the heat off and let it rest until you're ready to use it.
 7. Once the pasta dough is rested, you can roll by hand or use a pasta sheeter attachment for a stand mixer (my personal choice, it is much easier). I've done both, and the pasta sheeter gives a more consistent pasta. Begin by cutting your dough in half and flattening out to so it can go through the sheeter easier. Turn the mixer onto low or medium low speed with the pasta sheeter attached already. Run the first sheet through on size 1 and the fold it over on itself and run it through again. I do this about 4 times before moving to size 2 on the sheeter. From size 2, I work down to size 5 and only folding once per size now. Once done, your sheets should be about 18" to 24" long. Lay on a cutting board and cut to size to fit your pan you'll be using.
 8. To cook the pasta, add a minimum of 1 gallon of water to a pot and add 2-3 tablespoons of salt and bring to a boil. Add your pasta sheets one at a time and cook for 60-90 seconds, strain and lay flat on a baking sheet or arrange in the strainer to they are not folded over on each other.
 9. Now, its time to begin final assembly. Place some of the sauce with no meat into the bottom of the bread pan, this will allow the pasta to not cook to the bottom and stick. Next, add a sheet of pasta, and top with one third of the ricotta mixture and spread out. Add one third of the meat mixture on top of that and then top with a sheet of pasta. Repeat this process until you have 3-4 layers of lasagna. With the very last sheet of pasta on top, top with the remaining sauce, and then some fresh grated Romano and some shredded mozzarella. In total you should have used 4 sheets of pasta. If you have left over meat mixture or ricotta mixture, simply add another layer to your pasta before you top with the cheeses.
 10. Once assembled, place your lasagna into an oven preheated to 400F for about 20-25 minutes or until the cheese is golden brown on top. Remove from the oven and let it rest for 10-15 minutes. The resting period gives the lasagna a chance to cool and coagulate a

bit so it isn't a sloppy mess. I cut the lasagna into 4 pieces, or if you're hungry, cut it into two.