



## Baked Ziti

### Ingredients

- 2 Tablespoons Olive Oil
- 3 cloves Garlic, Minced (I used refrigerated minced garlic from a jar)
- 1 whole Large Onion, Diced (I used frozen onions)
- 1 pound Italian Sausage
- 1 pound Ground Beef
- 1 can (28 Ounce Can) Whole Tomatoes, With Juice (I used petite diced)
- 2 cans (14.5 Ounce) Tomato Sauce Or Marinara Sauce (I used the tomato sauce)
- 2 teaspoons Italian Seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon Red Pepper Flakes
- Salt And Pepper, to taste
- 16 ounces, weight Ziti Or Mostaccioli, Cooked Until Not Quite Al Dente (I used penne cuz I had that)
- 1 tub (15 Ounce) Whole Milk Ricotta Cheese
- 1-1/2 pound Mozzarella Cheese, Grated
- 1/2 cup Grated Parmesan Cheese
- 1 whole Egg
- Fresh Minced Parsley

### Preparation Instructions

Heat olive oil in a pot over medium heat. Add onions and garlic and saute for several minutes, or until starting to soften. Add Italian sausage and ground beef and cook until browned. Drain off fat, leaving a bit behind for flavor and moisture.

Add tomatoes, tomato juice, salt, pepper, Italian seasoning, and red pepper flakes. Stir and simmer for 25 to 30 minutes. After that time, remove 3 to 4 cups of the sauce to a different bowl to cool down.

In a separate bowl, mix together the ricotta cheese, 2 cups of the grated mozzarella, Parmesan, egg, and salt and pepper. Stir together just a couple of times (do not mix completely).

Drain the pasta and rinse under cool water to stop the cooking and cool it down. Pour it into the bowl with the cheese mixture and toss to slightly combine (there should still be large lumps.) Add the cooled meat sauce and toss to combine. Add half the coated pasta to a large casserole dish or lasagna dish. Spoon half of the remaining sauce over the top, then top with half the remaining mozzarella cheese. Repeat with another layer of the coated pasta, the sauce, and the mozzarella.

Bake at 375 degrees for 20 minutes, or until bubbling. Remove from oven and let stand 5 minutes before serving. (Sprinkle chopped parsley over the pasta before serving!)