

Two-Sheet Lasagna with Roasted Mushrooms & Winter Squash

Yield 4 small or 8 large servings | **Prep & cook time** This is a bit of a project

8 fresh lasagna noodles, cut 5 ½ by 8 ½ inches (recipe follows)

Butter, for greasing

2 cups bechamel (recipe follows)

About 3 cups roasted mushrooms (recipe follows)

About 1 cup roasted honeynut squash or roasted butternut squash (recipe follows)

About 1 cup finely ground or grated parmesan cheese

This is easily customizable and modular. Use your own choice of fillings, or your own pasta recipe, or store-bought fresh lasagna sheets if you can find them.

Everything can be prepared in advance, and then assembled and cooked to order. You can even freeze the noodles: Layer the cut noodles between sheets of parchment and freeze for about 30 minutes, until firm, then slide them into an airtight bag. Cook them right out of the freezer, for 30 to 60 seconds longer than specified for fresh ones.

1. Bring a pot of salted water to boil, and prepare an ice bath. Cook the fresh noodles 2 pieces at a time in the boiling water for 1 to 2 minutes, until they float and are tender (the cooking time will depend on how thinly they've been rolled out). Use a spider skimmer to move them to an ice bath to cool, then lay out on a clean kitchen towel and gently blot them dry.

2. Preheat your broiler for 15 minutes, or if you don't have a broiler, preheat the oven to its highest setting and position a rack close to the heat source. Line 2 baking sheets with aluminum foil and grease with butter.

3. Place 2 noodles on each of the prepared baking sheets. Spread about ¼ cup bechamel evenly over each one. Divide the roasted mushrooms and dollops of roasted squash on top. Spoon the rest of the bechamel over the fillings (¼ cup each) and sprinkle each about 2 tablespoons of cheese. Set the remaining lasagna noodles on top, and sprinkle with more cheese.

4. Place one pan under the broiler or heat source and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, rotating once, until the lasagna is blistered and any leaking bechamel sauce is bubbling at the edges. Remove from the heat and repeat with the second pan. Then turn off the broiler and place both pans in the oven that should still be hot, for 5 minutes more. Depending on appetites, serve a full lasagna per person, or cut each in half for smaller portions.

Spinach Pasta

Yield 8 lasagna rectangles, plus trimmings

5 ounces (140g) spinach

2 eggs

½ teaspoon fine salt

2 ½ to 3 cups (325g to 390g) all-purpose or 00 flour

Semolina flour, for dusting

1. In a blender, combine the spinach, eggs, and salt, and puree until velvety smooth. You may need to scrape or press the leaves down a few times before they catch on and start to liquefy.
2. In a mixing bowl, combine 2 ½ cups (325g) of the flour with the spinach mixture, using a fork until a shaggy mass folds, then start using your hands to mix. If the dough is very sticky, add more flour 1 or 2 tablespoons at a time, until it becomes a cohesive mass. Transfer to a floured work surface and knead well, for 5 to 7 minutes, until smooth and somewhat elastic. Add as much flour as necessary to prevent stickiness. Wrap tightly in food wrap, or seal in an airtight container, for 30 minutes or up to 2 hours.
3. Divide the dough into 8 portions. Working one piece at a time (and keeping the other pieces wrapped or sealed tightly to prevent drying out) first flatten the portion into a rectangle about ¼-inch thick.
 - *If using a pasta roller*, start on the widest setting and continue passing the dough through the roller, narrowing the setting each time, until the dough is rolled as thinly as possible.

- *If rolling by hand*, dust your work surface with flour, and roll the pasta from the center, flipping and rotating it often, and adding more flour as often as needed, until rectangular in shape and as thin as possible, ideally less than ⅛-inch thick. One way to relax the gluten is to hold the dough at one end and then somewhat agitatedly move the rolling pin back and forth an inch at a time down the length of the dough. ([This pasta tutorial by Samin Nosrat](#) illustrates the principle, and has lots of other great tips.)
4. Use a cutter or sharp knife to cut rectangles about 5 ½ by 8 ½ inches. (Cut the trimmings into abstract shapes, toss with semolina, and spread out on a sheet pan to freeze, then store in a bag or tupperware — you can save these for a future meal.) Arrange the rectangle on a parchment-lined baking sheet that's been lightly dusted with semolina flour and cover with a clean kitchen towel to prevent drying. Repeat with remaining portions, using the cut sheet as a guide for trimming the others, so that they're all exactly the same size.

Bechamel

Yield 2 cups

4 tablespoons (56g) unsalted butter

¼ cup (32g) all-purpose flour

2 cups (240ml) whole milk

2 bay leaves

½ teaspoon fine salt

Freshly grated nutmeg

Freshly ground black pepper

Place a medium saucepan over medium heat and when hot, melt the butter. As soon as foaming subsides, dump in the flour and whisk constantly for about a minute, until the mixture smells nutty and has become a bit more golden in color. Whisk in the milk, add the bay leaves, and bring to a simmer, watching carefully to prevent boiling. Continue cooking, whisking often, until the mixture thickens enough to coat a spoon. Season with the salt, several gratings of nutmeg, and black pepper, and set aside to cool.

Roasted Mushrooms & Winter Squash

Yield About 3 cups roasted mushrooms, 1 cup roasted squash

1 pound mushrooms, ideally a medley

1 honeynut or or small butternut squash (about a pound)

Olive oil

Fine salt

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Cut or tear the mushrooms into chunks. Spread them out on a parchment-lined baking sheet and toss with about 2 tablespoons of olive oil and a few pinches of salt. Cut the squash in half lengthwise, through the stem. Rub all over with a bit of olive oil and sprinkle with salt. Arrange cut-side down in an oven-safe skillet or on a small, parchment-lined baking sheet.
2. Transfer both pans to the oven. Roast the mushrooms for 15 to 25 minutes, until cooked through but still a bit juicy. Roast the squash face down for about 20 minutes, until tender, then carefully flip each piece and roast for 5 to 10 minutes more, until lightly caramelized on the surface, and fully tender.
3. Once cool, gently scoop out the seeds from the squash, and scrape the flesh of the skin transferring it to an airtight container. (Save the squash seeds and skin for stock.)