



**Chef Marco Lopez presents...**

## **Mushrooms and Spinach Lasagna Roll-Ups**

### **Ingredients:**

- 10 lasagne sheets
- 1 bag spinach (about 10 oz)
- 1 shallot or small onion
- 1 cup any type of mushroom
- 4 oz. mozzarella, shredded
- 1/2 lb. ricotta
- 3 oz. parmesan cheese, grated
- 3 -5 garlic cloves
- 1 egg
- salt and black pepper, to taste
- 2 oz. olive oil

### **Directions:**

- Preheat oven to 380°F.
- Cook the lasagne sheets per the package instructions (to speed up the cooldown time, briefly run under cold water, strain, and pour a little olive oil so they don't stick together); set aside cooked lasagne on a sheet pan.

### **Stuffing:**

- Drizzle the olive oil into a pan and fry the garlic and the shallot over a medium flame for about one minute. Add the mushrooms and cook until they are brown and soft.
- Slowly start adding in handfuls of the spinach. Not all of the spinach fits at one time, so mix around until some are wilted down to allow more room to add more spinach.
- Add a pinch of salt.
- Once all of the spinach is sautéed, strain and squeeze the excess liquid out and set aside to cool. Once cooled, chop the sauteed spinach so that it is easier to mix into the stuffing.



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- In a deep mixing bowl, add in the spinach mixture, egg, ricotta, parmigiana (or parmesan) cheese, mozzarella, and a pinch of sea salt and black pepper.
- Mix all together and scoop a couple of tablespoons onto each cooked lasagne sheet.
- Spread the stuffing over each sheet and then begin rolling the lasagna. If extra stuffing comes out when you are rolling, remove and add to a lasagne sheet that has less stuffing.
- Pour some tomato sauce on the bottom of the baking pot and start setting the lasagna rolls in it.
- Once you have all the rolls on the pot, pour some more sauce and bake for 25 to 30 minutes at 380 degrees.

## **Eggplant Meatballs**

### **Ingredients:**

For the meatballs:

- 1-1/2lb of Eggplant, cubed into small pieces
- 1 cup of Italian Seasoned Bread Crumbs
- 2 Tbsp of All-Purpose Flour
- 1/4 cup of Grated Mozzarella
- 1/3 cup of Freshly Grated Parm
- 1 Egg
- 2 Tbsp of Chopped Basil
- 2 Tbsp of Chopped Parsley
- 3 cloves of Garlic, minced
- Salt and Pepper to taste
- 1 Tbsp of Olive Oil

For the sauce:

- 1 medium onion peeled and quartered
- 2 stalks of celery cleaned and cut into chunks
- 2 medium carrots peeled and cut into chunks
- 2 Tbsp of Olive Oil
- 4 cloves of Garlic, smashed but not chopped

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- 56 oz (2 cans) of Crushed Tomatoes
- Fresh Basil (and parsley if desired)
- Pinch of Dried Oregano
- Salt, to taste

## Directions:

For the “meatballs”:

- Add one tablespoon of olive oil to a large skillet or medium-size saucepan, add the eggplant, stir to coat, then add the water along with a pinch of salt. Stir well, cover, and simmer (stirring occasionally) for about 20 minutes or until the eggplant is really soft.
- Remove from heat and place in a shallow bowl. Allow to cool.
- In a large bowl, add the cooled eggplant, breadcrumbs, egg, herbs, garlic, cheeses, flour, and a pinch of salt. Mix together well then put the mixture (covered) into the freezer for 10 minutes.
- Preheat your oven to 375 degrees.
- Line a baking sheet with some parchment paper, grease with olive oil, then add some water to a bowl and set it aside.
- Wet your hands in the water as you roll the "meatballs" so the mixture doesn't stick, once all rolled, brush with a little olive oil and bake for 20 minutes.

For the Sauce:

- In a large skillet, add the olive oil and garlic, allow it to sizzle for a minute, then add the onions and sauté for a minute. Add the celery and carrots, sauté and then add the tomatoes with a splash of water, bring to a simmer (If using canned plum tomatoes make sure you break them up as much as you can with a wooden spoon once they are up to a simmer) add the basil, oregano (and parsley) and a healthy pinch of salt and let it simmer for 20 minutes.
- Add the eggplant meatballs to the sauce, carefully spoon some of the sauce on top of the eggplant then cover and simmer for 5 minutes (no longer than 5 minutes or they will fall apart), sprinkle more parm on top, and serve!
- NOTE: When mixing eggplant mixture, if it looks too wet add more breadcrumbs (up to 1/3 cup) until the mixture thickens. Also, if you like a bit more texture, you can shallow-fry the meatballs instead of baking. Simply fry in a nonstick skillet using light olive oil until golden brown and crispy on all sides. Drain on a paper towel-lined plate.



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## **Toasty Pumpkin Chickpea Fritters**

### **Ingredients:**

- 1 1/2 cups chickpeas
- 1/2 cup pumpkin puree unsweetened
- 1/4 cup seeds, any type (if desired)
- 1 tsp apple cider vinegar
- 2-3 Tbsp maple syrup
- 1 Tbsp flour any variety
- 1 tsp garlic powder granules
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 pinch black pepper
- 1/2 cup Panko breadcrumbs

### Coating

- 3-5 Tbsp olive oil extra virgin

### **Directions:**

- Combine the chickpeas, pumpkin, seeds, vinegar, maple syrup, flour, garlic, and salt and pepper to a mixing bowl. Using a potato masher or a sturdy fork, mash the chickpeas down until you get a chunky puree in texture, like a chunky hummus.
- Warm a skillet over high heat. Add two tablespoons of olive oil.
- Pour the Panko into a small bowl and set aside.
- When the oil is hot, turn heat to low.
- Grab a golf ball-sized bit of the pumpkin mixture and form it into a patty. Dunk the patty into the bread crumbs to coat on all sides. Then gently place the patty into the hot oil - be careful with any splatters. Repeat with as many patties as you can fit in your skillet (three is usually standard for a medium skillet). When the patties are in the pan, turn the heat back up to medium.
- After about three minutes, carefully flip - the patties will be delicate. You can mold the sides back into place with the use of your spatula. Cook again for three minutes. If the oil starts to smoke, turn heat to low.
- Remove the cooked patties from the pan and place them on a paper towel on a platter. Let

them rest for at least three minutes before serving. Repeat with all of your pumpkin mixtures. Add another tablespoon of oil to the pan with each new batch of patties.

- Store in the fridge and reheat in the oven if desired. You can freeze as well. However, these fritters are best hot off the skillet!

## Notes

Sage Cream Sauce (optional) - this went along with the original recipe, here it is if you'd like to try it!...

**Directions:** Blend 4 fresh sage leaves with 1 cup silken tofu, 2 Tbsp lemon juice, 1 heaping spoonful of mayo, and a pinch of fresh parsley. For a spicy sage sauce, add in either cayenne or one Tbsp of chopped jalapeno.