

AUTHENTIC GREEK PASTITSIO by the Greek Travel Gurus

An all-time classic, lovingly prepared and served throughout all regions of Greece. Especially rooted in culture of the Ionian Islands such as Corfu, Zakynthos and Kefallinia that were under Venetian rule for centuries. Here are our little secrets!



Prep: 0:45' - Oven time: 0:50' - Servings: 8 – 10

Ingredients:

- 1 pack - 500 grams - thick spaghetti (number schemes are different depending on area and brand)
- ½ cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil.
- Ouzo - ice

For the meat sauce:

- 1 kilo ground beef
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 onion (red onions are sweeter!), finely diced
- 1 green bell pepper, and 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped or grated
- 2 ripe tomatoes, diced
- 1 tables spoon tomato paste
- ½ cup red wine, dry
- Salt and pepper and oregano to taste
- Pinch of sugar
- 1 cinnamon stick, or 1 teaspoon of grated cinnamon powder
- Small handful fresh parsley, finely chopped



For the béchamel

- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 50 grams butter
- 200 to 300 grams of all-purpose flour
- 1 liter milk
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 teaspoon Nutmeg, grated
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup finely grated bread crumbs
- 1 cup grated hard salty cheese like Greek kasseri, or kefalograviera (1/2 for blending into the béchamel mix and ½ to be spread over at the end.)

Let's plan your trip to Greece www.greektravelgurus.com

email: hello@greektravelgurus.com US tel: +1 415 800 3364 GR tel: +30 6970030138

AUTHENTIC GREEK PASTITSIO by the Greek Travel Gurus

Although it might seem a little labor intensive, **pastitsio** is actually a very easy dish to prepare. You can feed an army using only one large pot if you don't mind quickly washing it in between the steps.



- 1) Put ice into tumbler glass, add ouzo, and stir. Take a couple of sips to get into the mood. Heat the oven now at 220 degrees Celsius. This way you won't have to "pre-heat" the oven later.
- 2) Boil water in a large pot, add salt and a dash of extra virgin olive oil, and bring to a hardy boil. Add the spaghetti and cook to a strict al dente level. While the spaghetti is boiling, you can dice, chop and grate the ingredients and have another sip of ouzo.
- 3) When ready, strain the spaghetti and spread into your baking tray, add ½ cup of olive oil and grated feta cheese and mix till the olive oil has covered spaghetti and all surfaces of the baking tray. Have sip of ouzo.
- 4) Put the same pot back on the fire, let any water evaporate and add ½ cup olive oil, butter and bring to sizzle. Add diced peppers, onion and garlic and stir fry till they become slightly charred. Add ground beef and stir till the meat takes on a white-ish color and most of the liquid has evaporated. Add salt, pepper. Have sip of ouzo.
- 5) Add wine and let simmer till it has mostly evaporated. Then add diced tomatoes, parsley, tomato paste, sugar and cinnamon and stir. Let simmer till tomatoes have become soft and partially cooked. Add 1 cup of water, stir, and let simmer for about 15 minutes. We want the meat sauce to be juicy but not too much excess liquid. Have sip of ouzo.
- 6) When ready, use large spoon or spatula to transfer the meat sauce on to the spaghetti. Try to completely blanket the spaghetti evenly. Don't forget the corners! Have sip of ouzo.

Let's plan your trip to Greece www.greektravelgurus.com

email: hello@greektravelgurus.com US tel: +1 415 800 3364 GR tel: +30 6970030138

AUTHENTIC GREEK PASTITSIO by the Greek Travel Gurus

- 7) Wash the same large pot and place back on the fire. Let water evaporate, reduce the flame, and add ½ cup of extra virgin olive oil. Note that the more olive oil you begin with, the more flour you will need, and the more béchamel you'll have in the end. Slowly pour flour into the pot and stir constantly. Keep adding flour and stirring till the mix begins to become sticky and starts to bunch up.
Pour milk, (preferably heated till luke warm) and keep stirring more rigorously, till all the mix has been evened out. Keep on a low flame and stir till the béchamel begins to become a thicker, but not too thick! If you think that it will not suffice to spread over your baking pan, just add more milk and keep stirring till it becomes thick again. No time for ouzo here. Keep your eye on the béchamel.
- 8) Once ready, take off the fire, add grated kasseri, salt, pepper, and nutmeg and stir. Crack eggs and add to the béchamel and stir till it takes on an even golden color.
- 9) Pour béchamel over the meat sauce, and spread evenly. Don't forget the corners!
- 10) Sprinkle some grated cheese and finely grated bread crumbs over the béchamel and put in oven for approx. 50 minutes. Keep an eye on it, you want the béchamel to rise and take on a dark golden / brown color, but be careful not to burn it.
- 11) Take out of the oven and let cool for at about 20 minutes before cutting into square pieces. Enjoy with another glass of ouzo!

Καλή Όρεξη! - (Kali Oreksi) – Bon Appetite



Let's plan your trip to Greece www.greektravelgurus.com
email: hello@greektravelgurus.com US tel: +1 415 800 3364 GR tel: +30 6970030138