

Spaghetti Pie

Gloria, my ex-stepmother who was a fabulous cook, used to make this for us as kids. I still make this, and it is always great. I like to use different cheeses (whatever I happen to have that will work together, **but remember: you need a firm, gratable cheese and a soft cheese, not two hard cheeses or two soft cheeses.**

This is an excellent way to use your left over pasta and you can substitute almost any firm pasta. The key item to success is that you must mix everything completely, coating all the pasta before putting into your pan. This can be served warm or at room temperature as a main course. Try this with a green salad and a good bottle of wine, some crusty bread, and you will be happy.



Ingredients:

- 1 1/4 lb. pasta (preferably spaghetti or penne)
- 6 eggs, lightly beaten with a fork at room temperature
- 1 TBL. olive oil
- 1/2 cup milk or half and half
- 1 cup finely grated Parmesan or Pecarino-Romano cheese (about 4 oz.) + 2 extra TBL. for topping
- 2 TBL. fresh Italian parsley, minced
- 2 TBL. fresh basil, minced
- 2 cups marinara sauce, preferably home-made (Newman's Own is a great purchase)
- 1 lb. fresh Mozzarella cheese (about 4 cups shredded)
- 2 cups diced prociutto, ham or salami - 1/4 " dice
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper or more/less to taste
- 1 tsp. salt (add to water for pasta)
- 2 TBL. Panko bread crumbs or regular breadcrumbs (for topping)

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

1. In a large bowl, mix eggs, oil, milk, Parmesan cheese, parsley, basil and black pepper and mix well.
2. Stir in your pasta sauce and mix and then add your prosciutto or ham, pasta sauce and mozzarella and mix thoroughly with a rubber spatula.
3. Add your pasta and toss well. Grease a round 10" x 3" deep round baking pan or a spring-form pan and spoon the mix in, flattening it out evenly.
4. In a separate bowl, mix Panko/bread crumbs and 2 TBL Parmesan cheese together. Add a few drops of olive oil to moisten the bread crumbs. Sprinkle the Parmesan/Bread crumb mixture on top of the pasta pie, once again spreading evenly.
5. Bake at preheated oven 375 degrees for 40 minutes covering lightly with foil. Remove foil and then cook an additional 20 minutes for a crispy top.
6. Remove to a rack to cool, about 10 minutes. Run a knife around the edge to un-mold. (If using a spring-form pan, lift up carefully). You can serve directly from the pan, or for a great presentation, place a plate on the top of the pie, flip the pasta pie carefully out onto the plate, and then once again flip this back onto your chosen serving platter, so that the crispy browned top is showing. (I like use a cake platter for presentation, especially at a buffet).
7. Cut into wedges, serving additional Parmesan cheese and more warmed Marinara sauce on the side for those who want more. Garnish the whole pie with finely minced basil or Italian parsley.