

*From The Kitchen of
Chef Cal Kraft
Culinary Instructor, Author and Speaker*

Spinach Stuffed Lasagna Ruffles

1 – Package lasagna noodles [one half the box]
1 8 oz package cream cheese, softened [4 oz. cream cheese]
2 (10 oz.) packages spinach, thawed & drained [one box spinach]
1½ cups Parmesan cheese, grated [2/3s cup]
1- (15 oz.) Container Ricotta Cheese [1/2 of the container]
2 cups Mozzarella cheese, shredded [one cup]
1½ teaspoons Italian seasoning [1 teaspoon]
¼ teaspoon salt [a pinch]
Pinch of freshly ground nutmeg – if you have a nut allergy, this can be left out
32 ounces spaghetti sauce of your choice, preferably meatless [15 oz. size jar]
Approx. 8 ounces of meat, poultry or seafood – see note below. [4 oz. of meat]

Cook the noodles according to the package directions. Drain and set aside on a cookie sheet lined with wax paper. Place wax paper or parchment paper between the layers of cooked noodles. You usually get 18 to 20 noodles per box, so about three layers on a standard rimmed baking sheet. While the noodles are cooking, defrost the spinach in a pot of water and cook for about 6 minutes, drain well and then add some freshly grated nutmeg to the spinach. Now add the spinach to the cheese mixture and proceed.

For the filling, beat cream cheese until smooth, stir in the spinach, 1 cup of the Parmesan cheese, Ricotta cheese, Mozzarella cheese, Italian seasoning, nutmeg, and salt. Add meat* (sausage, ground beef, chicken or seafood at this time. Make sure it is ground so it will roll inside the noodles.)

Spread approximately 1/3 cup of the filling over each cooked noodle, spreading the filling so it covers the entire noodle. Roll the noodles up lengthwise (jellyroll style).

Pour one-third of the spaghetti sauce into a lightly greased ovenproof container. Place each roll, seam side down in the sauce. After placing the rolls in the pan, top with the remaining sauce and Parmesan cheese. Cover with foil and cook in a preheated 350-degree oven for 30 to 40 minutes or until hot throughout.

Serves 6 –See Note:

*Note: You can fill the rolls with a meat mixture (beef, pork, veal, chicken, turkey or seafood such as crab or shrimp. Just be sure the mixture is cooked prior to adding to the

filling. Make sure everything is ground into small sizes so it will roll up inside the lasagna noodle.

You can place one or two rolls in small ovenproof containers, sauce and then wrap in plastic wrap and then foil. You can freeze these for later use. Just defrost in the refrigerator overnight and then follow the cooking directions as shown above.

As information, a full box of uncooked lasagna noodles is usually around 12 to 15 noodles. The average size for a single meal would be two rolled noodles. Therefore you can have maybe 4 to 5 separate packaged meals in the freezer. Of course you can always cut the recipe in half or even thirds so as not to have too many items in the freezer. You will note that I have given you the recipe for a full box of noodles, then on the right of each ingredient in parenthesis, I have cut that recipe in half.