

BAKED PASTA CASSEROLE

SERVES 8–10 Claudia Heath

INGREDIENTS

2 cups finely chopped onion
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ tsp crushed red pepper flakes
1 tsp dried basil
1 tsp dried oregano
2 tbsp olive oil
1 lb shiitake mushrooms, stems discarded, sliced
4 tbsp butter, divided
3 tbsp flour
2 cups milk
2 28-oz cans plum tomatoes, drained well, coarsely chopped
¼ lb thinly sliced prosciutto, cut into strips
1 cup shredded Fontina
1 cup crumbled Gorgonzola
1½ cups freshly shredded Parmesan
⅔ cup finely chopped Italian parsley
1 lb farfalle pasta

In a large skillet, sauté onion, garlic, red pepper flakes, basil, and oregano in olive oil over medium-low heat until onion is softened. Add mushrooms and sauté over medium-high heat for 10–15 min until mushrooms are tender. Transfer mixture to a large bowl.

In the same skillet, melt 3 tbsp butter over medium-low heat. Whisk in flour and cook the roux for 3 min, stirring continuously. Add milk in a stream, whisking until mixture is thickened, 3–5 min. Add sauce to mushroom mixture. Add tomatoes, prosciutto, fontina, Gorgonzola, 1¼ cups Parmesan, and parsley.

Cook pasta for 5 min – pasta will not be done. Drain and add to mushroom mixture. Transfer to a buttered 9x13 or 4-qt casserole. Top with remaining butter and Parmesan. Bake at 450° for 25–30 min.

DEEDEE'S NOTES:

- Casserole may be prepared earlier in the day or 1–2 days in advance. Cover and chill. Bring to room temperature before baking.
- You may substitute white button mushrooms for the shiitake mushrooms.
- For a gluten-free alternative, you may substitute pulled chicken for the pasta – approx 4 cups for one casserole. Casserole will be soupier and is good served over rice.
- Recipe increases well. Bake in two casseroles.

This recipe was shared by Claudia Heath, good friend and great hostess!

It's a crowd-pleaser adapted from a Gourmet recipe from years ago.