

K's Kitchen: Hearty comfort food on a cold day

By Kathryn Reed

Winter weather, no matter the month, calls for comfort food. Lasagnas and casseroles fall into that category.

And because I have a thing for mushrooms, the recipe below had my taste buds and stomach calling for more – and a little too often. I kept finding myself heating up more in the microwave. We are rifling through this so fast I don't know if it would freeze well.

There are several moving parts at once, so it's not a recipe to make if you are going to be distracted by the phone or kids or the television.

Fusilli or bow tie pasta would work great. You want a type that is chunky. And take note the measurement is for cooked pasta, not raw.



Wild Mushroom Pasta

1 T olive oil

1 C onion, chopped

5 garlic cloves, minced

2 (8-ounce) packages exotic mushroom blend, chopped

2 T fresh oregano, chopped

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp kosher salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp black pepper

$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp ground nutmeg

1 (15-ounce) can tomato sauce

2 large eggs, lightly beaten

5 T fresh parsley, chopped

1 T unsalted butter

$1\frac{1}{2}$ T all-purpose flour

2 C nonfat milk

2 C shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese, divided

4 C hot cooked pasta

Cooking spray

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Heat oil in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic; sauté for 3 minutes or until tender. Add mushrooms. Cook for 8 minutes or until liquid almost evaporates. Stir in oregano, salt, black pepper, nutmeg and tomato sauce. Cook 2 minutes, stirring frequently. Remove from heat.

Combine eggs and parsley in a large bowl. Heat the butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Sprinkle flour evenly into pan; cook 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Gradually add milk to flour mixture, stirring with a whisk until smooth. Bring to a boil; cook 2 minutes or until thickened, stirring frequently. Remove from heat; let stand a few minutes. Stir in 1 cup cheese. Gradually add hot milk mixture to egg mixture, stirring constantly with a whisk. Add pasta to milk mixture; toss to combine.

Spread half of pasta mixture in an 11 x 7 baking dish coated with cooking spray. Top with mushroom mixture. Top with remaining pasta mixture. Cover with foil. Bake for 30 minutes. Remove foil; sprinkle with remaining cheese.

Broil 5 minutes or until cheese melts. Let stand 15 minutes.