

Choco Fever Dream

Baked Ziti Recipe for Large Gatherings

20 min Prep time	**35 min** Cook time	**55 min** Total time
12 Servings	**Easy** Difficulty	**Italian** Cuisine

Ingredients

Main Ingredients

- [ ] 1 lb ziti pasta
- [ ] 4 cups marinara sauce
- [ ] 1 cup ricotta cheese
- [ ] 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- [ ] 1 cup shredded mozzarella (fresh slices optional)
- [ ] 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- [ ] 2 tbsp olive oil
- [ ] 3 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 1 small onion, finely diced
- [ ] 1/4 cup fresh basil, torn
- [ ] 1 tsp dried oregano
- [ ] 1/2 tsp red pepper flakes (optional)
- [ ] Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Optional Add-ins

- [ ] 1 lb ground turkey or beef sausage, crumbled
- [ ] 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- [ ] 1 cup roasted red peppers, diced

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Lightly grease a 9-x-13-inch baking dish.
2. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil, add the ziti, and cook until just al dente, about 8 minutes. Drain and set aside.
3. In a skillet, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add onion and garlic, sauté until fragrant, then stir in the marinara sauce, oregano, red pepper flakes, and season with salt and pepper. Let it simmer for 5 minutes.
4. If using meat, brown it in the skillet before adding the sauce, then combine with the sauce.
5. Stir the ricotta into the sauce until smooth, then fold in half of the shredded mozzarella.
6. Toss the cooked ziti with the sauce mixture, transfer to the prepared dish, and sprinkle the remaining mozzarella and Parmesan evenly on top.
7. Cover with foil and bake for 20 minutes, then remove the foil and bake an additional 15 minutes until the cheese is bubbling and golden.
8. Let the bake rest for 10 minutes, garnish with fresh basil, and serve.

Nutrition per serving

420 kcal	18 g	55 g	15 g
Calories	Protein	Carbs	Fat

Tips & notes

- If the sauce looks thick, add a splash of pasta water before mixing with the pasta.
- For extra golden cheese, broil for 2 minutes at the end, watching closely.
- Feel free to double the recipe for even larger gatherings.