Sample Recipe

Sponsored by Real California Milk

Blog Post

Don't you just love a saucy casserole dish after a long, busy day? We make this dish year-round, it's that good! This cheesy pasta casserole is great for a family dinner and it's really easy to make. I *sowish* it could be a one-dish meal but, alas, it needs a side of veggies. I suggest serving it up with some zucchini or yellow squash in keeping with the Italian theme.



HOW I MAKE MY CHEESY PASTA CASSEROLE

I make this so often, I have all the steps down to a science. If you need a printable recipe card, it's at the bottom of this post.

You start by cooking the pasta and ground beef. I have these going on the stove simultaneously to save time.

The ricotta mixture is what adds plenty of creamy goodness to this dish. I mix the ingredients together one at a time in a medium-sized bowl.



There's nothing like the scent of fresh basil. Even though I use a prepared marinara, it doesn't quite bring a full Italian flavor. My marinara has plenty of oregano, so adding in some fresh basil gives the dish more flavor.

Everything blends together before it goes in the baking dish.

Adding some marinara to the bottom of the casserole helps to ensure that the pasta mixture won't stick to my cookware, plus you get that zesty marinara on all sides!

More marinara goes on top, followed by cheese. Then into the oven it goes!

CHOOSE YOUR INGREDIENTS WISELY

If a name brand item isn't called for in a recipe, I usually just get whatever brand is most appealing to me at the time. When it comes to dairy products, however, I always stick to the ones with the "Real California Milk" seal on them. These products are made with 100% real California milk from California dairy farms.



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CHEESY ITALIAN PASTA CASSEROLE



CHEESY PASTA CASSEROLE

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Sample Tutorial

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Stay sun safe

Young children need plenty of sun protection. Use sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 that is waterproof and protects from both UVA and UVB rays. Babies and toddlers should wear a swim shirt and hat for added protection.

Let there be shade

Bring a UV-blocking shade or umbrella to give your hot little kiddos a break from the sun. We have this great little tent (I mentioned it in this post about keeping babies sun safe) that we'll bring if we're going to be at the beach all day. It's lighter and easier to carry than an umbrella, and all 3 little guys can fit inside.



Take care of your little one's feet

Water shoes are great for babies and toddlers because the hot sand can burn their little feet. But when sand gets in these shoes it can cause blisters. Our 3 year olds wear flip flops to walk across the hot sand. When they get to the cool, wet sand by the water they are fine in their bare feet.

Stay cool and hydrated

Bring water for everyone, and make sure they drink it! You can freeze one water bottle the night before to use as an ice pack, then as it thaws it's great for a refreshing drink.

Protect your valuables

Keep your cell phone free of sand and water damage by storing it in a zip-top bag while you're at the beach. Other small things like keys and jewelry can be zipped up as well to make sure they don't get lost in the sand.



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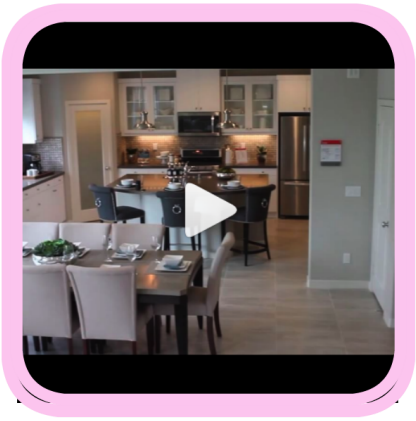
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