



main dishes

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hot pink cannelloni

12 cannelloni

1 baked beet, about 10 ounces (see note below)

5 tablespoons butter, divided

1/2 pound ricotta cheese

1 egg

1/2 cup dry bread crumbs

salt and pepper

2 tablespoons flour

1 cup milk or half-and-half

salt and white pepper

freshly grated nutmeg

1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Cook cannelloni in boiling salted water until almost tender. Drain and place on a lightly oiled plate, separating tubes so they don't stick together. Peel and slice the cooked beet. Purée until smooth. Melt 3 tablespoons of the butter in a saucepan. Add beet purée and cook gently for about 10 minutes. Transfer to bowl and blend in ricotta cheese, egg, and bread crumbs. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Melt remaining 2 tablespoons of butter in a small saucepan. Stir in flour and add milk or half-and-half. Bring just to boiling, reduce heat, and simmer gently until mixture is reduced to a sauce. Stir in salt, white pepper, and nutmeg to taste. While sauce is cooking, stuff cannelloni with beet mixture and place in lightly oiled baking dish, one layer deep. Pour sauce over and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Bake 30 minutes.

Serves 4.

VEGETARIAN

IN ITALY, VENDORS SELL BAKED BEETS, READY TO SLICE FOR SALAD WITH SWEET ONION, OIL, AND LEMON OR TO USE AS A RAVIOLI FILLING. I NEVER SEEM TO FIND THE TIME TO MAKE RAVIOLI, SO I USE THE SAME BEET MIXTURE FOR CANNELLONI.

THE BAKED BEETS CAN ALSO BE SERVED AS IS.

THE COOKED BEETS CAN BE FROZEN FOR FUTURE USE. PREHEAT OVEN TO 350°F. WRAP EACH SCRUBBED BUT UNPEELED BEET IN FOIL AND BAKE UNTIL TENDER. TIME WILL VARY WITH THE SIZE OF THE BEET, BUT COUNT ON AT LEAST 1½ HOURS, PROBABLY MORE. DO NOT UNDERCOOK OR THE PURÉE WILL BE LUMPY.



cardoons pellegrini

beef with cardoons and mushrooms, p. 140

cardoons pellegrini, p. 167

cardoons á la lyonnaise, p. 168

barely dairy winter squash lasagna

**5 tablespoons olive oil, divided, or
4 tablespoons oil and one of butter**
2 cloves garlic, chopped
**2 cups sliced mushrooms (crimini,
portabella or a mixture of your choice;
I haven't tried this with chanterelles
but I'll bet it would be wonderful)**
1/4 teaspoon salt
**2 cups baked winter squash
up to 1/2 cup red wine**
**2 tablespoons chopped parsley or
mixed fresh Italian herbs**
2 cups tomato sauce
3 tablespoons flour
**2 cups unsweetened soy milk
salt and pepper**
1/2 cup grated Romano cheese
**1/4 pound mozzarella, grated or
sliced in thin strips**
lasagna noodles (see note below)

: Halve your squash with a cleaver, scoop out the strings
: and seeds, and rub a little olive oil onto the cut parts.
: Bake, skin side up, on a cookie tray in a 375°F oven until
: you can depress the flesh right through the skin. It's
: ok if some of the flesh blackens just a bit on the edges.
: (I use a silicon mat or bakers parchment to simplify
: cleanup.) Maybe 40 minutes, but it depends on the size
: and density of the squash. You can scoop the soft flesh
: right out of the skin with a serving spoon.
: Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a heavy saucepan or skillet,
: add the chopped garlic and cook for a minute or two.
: Don't let it brown. Add the sliced mushrooms and sauté
: until they start to get limp. Add squash and herbs, stir to
: mix in the mushrooms and garlic, and continue cooking
: over low heat for about 5 minutes. Add wine as needed
: to keep the mixture from sticking and stir occasionally.
: Remove from heat and reserve.
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THIS SERVES 6 WITH LESS THAN 1/2 A POUND OF CHEESE TOTAL. YOU CAN SKIP THE CHEESE ENTIRELY, AND IT'S STILL GOOD, THOUGH THE FLAVOR BALANCE IS DIFFERENT. THE SECRET TO HAVING IT STILL DELIVER THE RICH, COMFORTING FEEL OF LASAGNA IS THE BÉCHAMEL. FOR REASONS I DON'T FULLY UNDERSTAND, UNSWEETENED SOY MILK MAKES A SUPERIOR BÉCHAMEL SAUCE. IT'S RICH AND CREAMY AND EVERY BIT AS SATISFYING AS A CREAM-BASED SAUCE. I DON'T FEEL THE SAME ABOUT SOY CHEESE, SOY MILK IN MY TEA, OR SOY YOGURT, BUT SOY BÉCHAMEL IS WORTH TRYING. THE SQUASH SHOULD BE A FLAVORFUL, DRY-FLESHED TYPE. I USED BUTTERNUT, BUT HUBBARDS, KABOCHAS, OR MANY OTHERS WOULD FILL THE BILL. I LEAVE IT TO YOU WHETHER TO PREBOIL THE LASAGNA NOODLES OR USE A NO-BOIL VARIETY, WITH ONE CAVEAT: THIS COMBINATION IS LESS LIQUID THAN MANY LASAGNAS, WHICH MEANS THAT NO-BOIL NOODLES CAN END UP A BIT CHEWY.

: In a small, heavy saucepan, heat the remaining olive
: oil or oil and butter over medium heat. Add the flour
: and stir right away so it makes a smooth paste instead
: of clumps. Slowly add the soy milk, stirring constantly.
: Bring to mixture to just below boiling, lower heat, and
: cooking, stirring often, until it begins to thicken. Add
: Romano cheese, salt and pepper and keep over very low
: heat for another minute or so until cheese is melted.
: Remove from heat.

: *Assembly*

: Start with a thin layer of tomato sauce, followed by a
: layer of pasta, and half the squash/mushroom mixture.
: Another layer of pasta, a little more tomato sauce, the
: remaining squash, topped with slices of mozzarella,
: and half the béchamel. The final layer of pasta is
: topped with the rest of the tomato sauce and the
: béchamel, swirled together.
: Bake at 350 F, covered, until pasta is tender and flavors
: are blended.

: *Serves 6.*

: **VEGETARIAN**