



Food & Wine - Speedy Ziti recipe with Il Bastardo Sangiovese

A classic medium-bodied Sangiovese that pairs perfectly with pasta dishes.

As the name of this recipe suggests, this is the fastest way to make really good baked ziti. The key is to doctor good-quality jarred tomato sauce, like Rao's, with ground meat, onion, garlic and spices. From there, you add creamy fresh ricotta, shredded mozzarella and flavorful Parmesan. Once the meat is browned, everything comes together quickly and the dish bakes up to gooey cheesy perfection in just 15 minutes.

Ingredients

- 1 pound ziti or penne
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 pound lean ground sirloin
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
- Salt
- One 24-ounce jar marinara sauce (3 cups)
- 1 1/2 cups fresh ricotta (about 12 ounces)
- 1/2 pound packaged mozzarella, shredded
- 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

How to Make It

Step 1

Preheat the oven to 450° and bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the ziti to the pot and boil until just al dente. Drain and return the ziti to the pot.

Step 2

Meanwhile, in a large, deep skillet, heat the olive oil. Add the onion and garlic, cover and cook until just softened, about two minutes. Add the ground sirloin, crushed red pepper and paprika and season with salt. Cook over high heat, stirring to break up the meat with a spoon, until the meat is no longer pink, about three minutes. Add the marinara sauce and bring to a boil. Cover partially and cook over moderate heat for five minutes.

Step 3

Add the sauce to the ziti in the pot and stir to coat it thoroughly. Add the ricotta in large dollops and stir gently, leaving it in large clumps. Pour half of the ziti into a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and top with half of the mozzarella and Parmigiano. Repeat with the remaining ziti and cheeses.

Step 4

Bake the ziti on the top rack of the oven for about 15 minutes, until it is bubbling and browned. Let the ziti rest for 10 minutes before serving.