

Pasta bake

Ingredients

2 cups dried risoni pasta
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1 brown onion, peeled & chopped
3 middle bacon rashers, trimmed, chopped
800g beef mince (optional) or 2 x cans cannellini beans drained
1 kilogram of grated zucchini
2 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
3 sprigs fresh rosemary stalks removed and finely chopped
3 sprigs fresh oregano stalks removed and finely chopped
2 x 410g cans thick tomatoes or 2 kilograms fresh tomatoes skins removed
1 cup fresh basil leaves chopped
1 ½ cups grated tasty cheese
Extra basil leaves, to serve
50g butter, chopped
1/3 cup plain flour
3 cups milk

Method

1. Cook risoni in a large saucepan of boiling salted water, following packet directions, until tender. Drain well.
2. Meanwhile, heat oil in a large deep frying pan. Add onion and bacon. Cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until browned and tender. Add mince if using. Cook, stirring with a wooden spoon to break up lumps, for 3 minutes or until browned. Add garlic and herbs. Simmer for 1 minute. Stir in tomatoes, zucchini and beans if using. Simmer for 15 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, make the béchamel sauce. Place butter in a large saucepan for 1 minute or until melted. Add flour. Whisk to combine. Cook for 1 minute or until bubbling. Gradually whisk in 1 cup milk until smooth. Stir in remaining milk. Cook on medium for 3 to 4 minutes, whisking every minute, or until sauce thickens. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.
4. Preheat grill on high. Spoon risoni into an 8-cup-capacity flameproof baking dish. Spread evenly to level. Top with mince or bean mixture. Spread to level. Arrange basil in a single layer over mince. Pour over béchamel. Sprinkle with cheese. Grill for 2 minutes or until cheese is melted and golden. Serve sprinkled with extra basil.

Serves 12 kids