

Italian Stuffed Shells

Makes 5 Servings

Preparation: 15 minutes , Cook Time: 10 minutes

From Laura Shiers

10 jumbo pasta shells
1 1/2 cups pasta sauce
1/4 cup cottage cheese
1/2 cup mozzarella cheese
1 tablespoon butter diced

1/3 onion diced
1/3 green bell pepper
1/2 pound ground beef
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

1. Preheat the oven to 350°.
2. Fill a large pot a little more than half full of water and bring to a boil.
3. Add pasta shells and stir occasionally so they don't stick to the bottom.
4. When pasta is al dente, drain all water in a colander and rinse shells under COLD water so they don't stick together. Set aside in the colander.

WHILE THE PASTA IS COOKING - Line your round casserole dish with tin foil, this will take two pieces.

1. While the pasta is cooking, place butter into a skillet with tall sides to melt.
2. Once butter is melted, add onion to skillet and saute until onions are softened
3. Add diced bell pepper to onions and saute for 1 minute.
4. Add ground beef in into skillet with onions and bell peppers. Sprinkle with garlic powder, salt and pepper.
5. Cook on medium-high heat until the beef is no longer pink.
6. Drain all excess grease by blotting with a paper towel, moving the meat over to the side.
7. In a small mixing bowl, combine only 1 cup of the pasta sauce (reserving 1/2 c. of the sauce to use later), cottage cheese and only 1/4 c. of the mozzarella cheese (reserving 1/4 c. of the cheese to use later).
8. Add cooked ground beef into the mixing bowl with the sauce and cheese mixture. Stir until well combined.
9. Using a pastry brush or spoon, spread a small amount of the reserved sauce on the bottom and sides of the lined round glass dish.
10. Spoon the meat mixture into each pasta shell. Evenly distribute all of the filling. Do not waste any.
11. Place the stuffed shells, open side down, into the round glass dish. Repeat until all shells are full and placed in the dish. If you have remaining meat mixture, spread it in the dish between the shells.
12. Spread the remaining pasta sauce on top of the pasta shells, evenly covering each one.
13. Sprinkle the remaining mozzarella cheese on top of the shells.
14. Place the stuffed shells into the oven on the top rack and cook for 10 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and bubbly.
15. Remove from the oven and eat and enjoy!