

When it comes to comfort food, few dishes can rival the heartwarming allure of a well-made casserole. On the evening of August 22, 2024, at exactly 7:59 PM, those who were fortunate enough to sit down to a hearty serving of Grandma's Ground Beef Casserole were in for a culinary treat. This dish is a timeless classic, combining ground beef with a medley of vegetables, pasta, and a rich, flavorful sauce. Here's a detailed overview of what makes Grandma's Ground Beef Casserole a delight to prepare and savor.

Detailed Ingredients

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 can tomato sauce (15 ounces)
- 1 can corn, drained (15 ounces)
- 1 package wide egg noodles
- 2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning

Prep Time, Cook Time, Total Time, Yield

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 45 minutes

Yield: 6 servings

Detailed Directions and Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit (175 degrees Celsius).
2. Cook the egg noodles according to the package instructions, then drain and set aside.

3. In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat and sauté the chopped onion, green bell pepper, and minced garlic until they become tender, about 5 minutes.
4. Add the ground beef to the skillet, breaking it apart with a spoon as it cooks. Continue to cook until the beef is browned and cooked through, about 10 minutes.
5. Stir in the tomato sauce, drained corn, salt, pepper, and Italian seasoning. Let the mixture simmer for 5 minutes to blend the flavors.
6. In a large mixing bowl, combine the cooked egg noodles with the beef and vegetable mixture. Mix well to ensure even distribution of ingredients.
7. Transfer the mixture into a greased 9×13-inch baking dish. Spread it out evenly with a spatula.
8. Sprinkle the shredded Cheddar cheese uniformly over the top of the casserole.
9. Bake in the preheated oven until the cheese is melted and bubbly, about 20 minutes.
10. Allow the casserole to cool slightly before serving, and enjoy your comforting and delicious meal!

Notes

For those who prefer a spicier kick, you can add a teaspoon of crushed red pepper flakes to the beef mixture when simmering. Additionally, you can substitute ground turkey or chicken for a lighter version of this casserole. Feel free to incorporate other vegetables such as peas or carrots for added nutrition and color.

Cook Techniques

The technique of layering flavors in casseroles is key to achieving a deeply satisfying dish. Start with a hot pan to sauté the vegetables as this ensures they sweat and soften without becoming mushy. Browning the beef not only cooks it thoroughly but also enhances its flavor through the Maillard reaction. Mixing the cooked pasta with the sauce mixture ensures that the flavors are well-integrated throughout the dish. Lastly, baking the casserole with a cheese topping forms a golden, bubbly crust that is both visually appealing and tasty.

FAQ

Can I make this casserole ahead of time?

Yes, you can make this casserole in advance. Assemble the casserole as directed, cover it with foil, and refrigerate for up to 24 hours before baking. When you're ready to serve, bake it at the same temperature, adding an extra 10 minutes to ensure it's heated through.

Can I freeze this casserole?

Absolutely. To freeze, assemble the casserole in a freezer-safe dish, cover it tightly with plastic wrap and then aluminum foil, and