

Vegan Butternut Squash and Spinach Lasagna

Courtesy of Chef Lauren Mahlke of the Planted Table



Vegan Butternut Squash and Spinach Lasagna- layered with almond ricotta and roasted butternut squash, this lasagna is sure to make for a perfect family meal!

Between roasting the squash, sautéing the spinach, boiling the lasagna noodles, and blending up the ricotta, this recipe isn't a quick one. It's one to schedule when you want to enjoy some time in your kitchen without rushing.

Even though it takes a little bit of time to make, it's worth it! The squash pairs so well with the creamy ricotta, sautéed spinach and crispy sage.

You can also prep it head of time. Just assemble then cover and wait to cook until everyone is about ready to eat. There is nothing like the smell of lasagna cooking in the oven on a cold day. I made these lasagnas in advance and froze them and shared at a vacation rental with my family. This is lasagna the entire family is sure to love. After hiking and playing outside the smell of lasagna bubbling in the oven brought all of the family around the table to enjoy with a big salad and crunchy bread.

I love when vegan comfort food and health are highlighted in the same dish and I am so excited to share my trick of working with butternut squash, so you will find more ways to use this wonderful and tasty vegetable.

Chef Lauren's Tips: When prepping butternut squash, use a potato peeler and peel the neck (straight part) of the squash. It is helpful when picking your squash to find one with a long/straight neck. Keep the skin on the bulb (the round part) of the squash and slice off from the bulb.

After peeling the skin of the neck, cut the neck in half lengthwise and slice into thin half moons. The bulb should then be sliced in half, remove seeds and save for roasting. *keep the seeds and roast them for a snack with cumin, salt and smoked paprika with some olive oil

With a cleaned out bulb, place in oven low and slow so you can scoop out all the meat and mix into your marinara.

I like to save many bulbs and freeze them until I am ready to cook them like this for soups, stews, sauces and butternut squash marinara.

Ingredients:

- Lasagna

1 lb Organic lasagna pasta or gluten free lasagna or grain free lasagna pasta (cooked following packaging instructions)

1 Large butternut squash with large long neck, about 2 pounds

2 cups Almond ricotta (See Ricotta Recipe)

Our favorite quick and easy Almond Ricotta

4 cups Thin julienne yellow onions

This is our favorite Julienne Peeler

6 cups Rinsed fresh spinach

¼ cup Vegan butter

1 cup Bundle of sage leaves, stems removed

- Marinara

1 cup Small dice yellow onion

2 tsp Minced garlic

2 tsp Minced basil

2 tsp Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Always chose California Olive Oil

2 tbsp Stems with leaves of rosemary

2 tbsp Stems with leaves of thyme

2 cups Stewed organic tomatoes

½ cup Tomato paste

1 cup Red wine

¼ cup Red wine vinegar

1 cup Cooked butternut squash meat, removed from bulb, rough chop

½ cup Nutritional yeast

Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°

Fill a large stock pot with boiling salted water.

Peel neck of butternut squash with potato peeler. Remove the neck from the bulb. Cut the neck in half lengthwise and slice into thin half-moons 1/4 inch thick. The bulb should then be sliced in half, remove seeds and drizzle cut side with 1 tablespoon of olive oil sprinkle with salt and pepper. Let roast cut side up for 1 hour until meat is tender. Let cool slightly so you can touch and remove meat from the skin, rough chop the meat and save for the marinara.

While the bulb is cooking blanch the butternut squash necks in boiling salted water for 3 minutes until tender. Place in a large bowl with salt and ice water to stop cooking of squash.

In a large sauté pan add butter and onions and on medium heat let caramelize for 20-25 minutes stirring often. Add salt to taste. The onions should turn golden to reach full caramelizing. Add Spinach and sauté for 5-8 minutes until all spinach is cooked down. Drain off any liquid and reserve into a bowl for lasagna assembly.

In a large sauce pot on medium high heat add 1 tablespoon of olive oil, rosemary and thyme stems with leaves and sauté in oil for 1-2 minutes. Add onions and sauté for 5-10 minutes until glistening. Remove thyme and rosemary stems and add minced garlic and sauté for 1-2 minutes. Add remaining ingredients except the vinegar and nutritional yeast. Bring pot of marinara to boil and reduce to a simmer on medium heat for 20 minutes stirring occasionally. Taste for seasoning and add salt and pepper.

Use a hand held immersion blender to smooth marinara this will bring the color more orange with the blended butternut squash. Add a splash of red wine vinegar for seasoning and nutritional yeast for seasoning.

In a large 9x13 Pyrex dish, pour marinara on bottom of the dish a thin layer. Then spread lasagna pasta evenly in one layer. Spread half the ricotta on pasta and lay the half-moons of butternut squash on top of ricotta.

Lay the next layer of pasta and spread all spinach and onion mixture. Lay the next layer of pasta and do the 2nd half of ricotta and butternut squash half-moons. Lay the last layer of pasta on top of butternut and pour generously with marinara. Place sage leaves on top of marinara.

When ready to eat, roast in oven at 350° for 35-45 minutes. Enjoy with a glass of Sangiovese wine and admire your hard work!

Website: <https://plantedtable.com/recipes/vegan-butternut-squash-and-spinach-lasagna/>