

Pastitsio

1 lb. bucatini pasta (use penne or something similar if you can't find it)
1 egg, lightly beaten
2 Tbsp. butter, melted
1/4 cup grated myzithra cheese
1 batch Greek meatsauce (recipe follows)
1 batch béchamel sauce (recipe follows)
1/4 cup kefalotyri cheese
1/4 cup breadcrumbs (optional)

Preheat the oven to 375.

Cook the bucatini until barely al dente in a large pot of lightly salted water. Drain, and then mix well with the beaten egg, butter, and the myzithra cheese.

Lightly grease your baking dish, and pour half the pasta mixture into the pan. Layer the entire meatsauce mixture over that, followed by the remaining pasta. Finally, pour the béchamel sauce over the noodles, and spread the mixture evenly. Top with the kefalotyri cheese and the breadcrumbs.

Bake for about 45 minutes, until golden brown on top and bubbly. Let it sit for about 15 minutes or so before slicing into it.

Greek Meatsauce

1 Tbsp. olive oil
2 medium onions, diced
4 cloves garlic, minced
2 lbs. ground beef (or lamb)
1 (6 oz.) can tomato paste
2 cups water (or broth)
1 cinnamon stick
5 or 6 whole cloves or allspice berries, or about 1/2-3/4 tsp. total ground
1/4 cup fresh chopped parsley, or about 1.5 Tbsp. dried
1 or 2 bay leaves
salt and pepper

In a large heavy bottomed pan, heat your olive oil. Add the onions and sauté until tender. Add the beef and onion, cooking until browned. Stir in the tomato paste and cook off for a minute or two before adding the water, cinnamon stick, cloves/allspice, parsley, bay, and salt and pepper to taste. Bring to a boil and then reduce heat to a simmer. Simmer, partially covered, for an hour, stirring occasionally.

Béchamel

6 Tbsp. butter

2/3 cup flour

1 qt. milk (at least 2%, warm or room temp)

1/2 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg

3/4 cup kefalotyri

2 eggs

1 egg yolk

Melt butter in a large saucepan. Stir in the flour and make a roux, cooking for a few minutes until golden brown. Slowly add the milk, stirring constantly with a whisk to combine well and avoid lumps. Bring the mixture up to just barely a boil. Continue cooking (and stirring) until the mixture thickens and coats the back of a wooden spoon. Add the nutmeg and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Off the heat, whisk in the cheese, eggs, and egg yolk.