

Baked Ziti and Summer Veggies

Yields: 4 (1 ½ cup) servings

Ingredients:

- 4 oz. uncooked ziti
- 1 T. olive oil
- 2 cups chopped yellow squash
- 1 cup chopped zucchini
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 2 cups chopped tomato
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese, divided
- 2 T. chopped fresh basil
- 2 tsp. chopped fresh oregano
- ¾ tsp. salt, divided
- 1/8 tsp. crushed red pepper
- ¼ cup part-skim ricotta cheese
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- Cooking spray



Directions:

1. Cook pasta according to package directions and drain. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add oil to pan. Add squash, zucchini, and onion; sauté 5 minutes. Add tomato and garlic; sauté 3 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in pasta, ½ cup mozzarella, herbs, ½ teaspoon salt, and pepper.
3. Combine ricotta, remaining salt, and egg. Stir into pasta mixture. Spoon into an 8-inch square glass or ceramic baking dish coated with cooking spray; sprinkle with remaining mozzarella. Bake at 400 degrees F for 15 minutes or until bubbly and browned.

Nutrition Info Per Serving: 300 Calories, 12.1 g fat, 5.3 g saturated fat, 16.5 g protein, 32.8 g carbohydrate, 4.1 g fiber, 640 mg sodium.

With summer on its way, a variety of fresh produce is in season and at its prime for quality and taste, and affordability. Summer months also tend to be busy for most people and therefore that head of lettuce may look brown and wilted by the time you remember it in your fridge. To avoid this and to keep your produce fresher for a longer time, follow these tips.

- Some fruits and vegetables should be stored separately because some produce ethylene gas as they ripen, while others are sensitive to ethylene gas which can ripen them prematurely. For example, avocados, bananas, mangoes, pears and tomatoes should be stored separately from apples, broccoli, carrots, and leafy greens.
- Potatoes, onions, and tomatoes should be stored in a cool, dry place, but not in the fridge.
- Salad greens and fresh herbs should be stored in the fridge in bags filled with a little air and sealed tightly.
- To lengthen the freshness of citrus fruits such as oranges, lemons and limes, store in the fridge in a mesh or perforated plastic bag.
- For a longer shelf life, celery should be wrapped in aluminum foil and stored in the vegetable bin in the fridge.
- Make sure to store carrots, lettuce, and broccoli dry in the fridge in the crisper drawer.
- To keep a pineapple longer, cut the leafy tops off and store the pineapple upside down. This also helps redistribute the sugars that sink to the bottom during shipping.

- Wash berries just before serving. If you wash them ahead of time, mold is more likely to grow due to the moisture.
- If you normally forget the fruits and veggies in the crisper drawer, store them at eye level in your fridge.
- If you think you will not be able to use up your fresh fruits or veggies before they go bad, freeze them. They will last for months in the freezer.

A good way to use up vegetables is to throw them in a casserole. The veggies in this casserole below can be substituted with whatever you have on hand. Dried herbs can also be used in place of the fresh herbs.