

# Greek Baked Ziti



Inspired by the classic Greek comfort dish known as pastitsio, this pasta casserole uses fresh and flavorful ingredients.

**Hands-On:** 50 mins

**Total:** 1 hr 20 mins

**Yield:** Makes 6 to 8 servings



## Ingredients

12 ounces ziti pasta  
1 small yellow onion, chopped  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1 ½ pounds lean ground beef  
2 (15-oz.) cans tomato sauce  
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice  
1 ½ teaspoons dried oregano  
1 teaspoon sugar  
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1 ½ teaspoons kosher salt, divided  
3 tablespoons butter  
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour  
3 cups milk  
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese  
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
Vegetable cooking spray  
1 (8-oz.) package shredded mozzarella cheese  
⅓ cup fine, dry breadcrumbs

## Directions

### Step 1

Preheat oven to 350°. Cook pasta in a Dutch oven according to package directions.

### Step 2

Meanwhile, sauté onion in hot oil in large skillet over medium-high heat 4 to 5 minutes or until tender. Add garlic; sauté 30 seconds. Add beef; cook, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes or until crumbled and no longer pink. Drain mixture, and return to skillet.

### Step 3

Stir tomato sauce, next 4 ingredients, and 1 tsp. salt into meat mixture. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat, and cook, stirring occasionally, 2 minutes. Remove from heat.

### Step 4

Melt butter in a large saucepan over low heat. Whisk in flour, and cook, whisking constantly, 2 minutes. Gradually whisk in milk. Increase heat to medium, and cook, whisking constantly, 5 to 7 minutes or until thickened and bubbly. Stir in Parmesan cheese, pepper, and remaining ½ tsp. salt. Add sauce to pasta, stirring to coat.

### Step 5

Transfer pasta mixture to a lightly greased (with cooking spray) 13- x 9-inch baking dish. Top with beef mixture, mozzarella cheese, and breadcrumbs.

### Step 6

Bake at 350° for 20 to 25 minutes or until mixture is bubbly and cheese is melted. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

### Step 7

**MAKE IT AHEAD** Fix and freeze this dish (unbaked) for a hands-off dinner. Let it stand 30 minutes before baking, and add 15 to 20 minutes in the oven.