

Pepperoni Pizza Casserole

Active time:

25 min.

Total time:

35 min.

Yield

Serves 8 (serving size: 2 cups)

By **ROBIN BASHINSKY**

Rich and filling, this pizza-meets-garlic-bread casserole is perfect for a Friday night when your kid invites over half the neighborhood. The cheese, pepperoni, and mushrooms are a match made in heaven for buttery bread, and the bottom of the casserole gets nice and crisp. Pepperoni slices have a tendency to stick together, so make sure to separate them nicely when you stick them into the pan with the marinara.

Ingredients

2 tablespoons olive oil

12 ounces fresh cremini mushrooms,
quartered lengthwise

1 cup chopped onion (from 1 [11-oz.]
onion)

1 (24-oz.) jar marinara sauce

6 ounces pepperoni slices, divided

Cooking spray

8 (1 3/4-oz.) frozen garlic bread
slices, thawed

8 ounces mozzarella cheese,
shredded (about 2 cups)

1 ounce Parmesan cheese, grated
(about 1/4 cup)

1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper
(optional)

How to Make It

Step 1 Preheat oven to 425°F with rack in bottom position. Heat oil in a large skillet over high. Add mushrooms and onion; cook, stirring often, until mushrooms are browned and softened, 7 to 8 minutes. Stir in marinara sauce and 4 ounces of the pepperoni (about 56 slices). Remove from heat.

Step 2 Coat a deep 13- x 9-inch casserole dish with cooking spray. Arrange garlic bread, lying flat with cut sides up, in casserole dish. Top evenly with mushroom-pepperoni mixture. Sprinkle with mozzarella. Arrange remaining 2 ounces pepperoni (about 28 slices) over mozzarella. Sprinkle with Parmesan. Bake in preheated oven until cheese is bubbly and lightly browned, 12 to 15 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes. If desired, sprinkle with crushed red pepper.