

ZUCCHINI LASAGNA

3 cups thinly sliced zucchini, peeled and seeded

1 medium onion, chopped
 ½ tsp. fresh garlic, crushed
 1 large can tomato sauce
 1 small can tomato paste
 1 tsp. oregano
 1/8 tsp. basil
 1/8 tsp. thyme
 1 tsp. salt
 ¼ tsp. pepper
 1 tsp. minced parsley
 1 cup hot water
 1 box lasagna noodles
 2 eggs

8 oz. ricotta cheese
 ½ pint cottage cheese
 8 oz. shredded mozzarella cheese

Brown onion and garlic in skillet or sauté pan in 1 Tbsp. cooking oil. Add zucchini slices and continue to cook for 5-10 minutes. Add tomato sauce, paste, spices and water. Cover and simmer for 10-15 minutes, or until zucchini slices are tender. Cook 1 box lasagna noodles as directed on box; drain. In a separate bowl, beat 2 eggs; add 8 oz. ricotta cheese and ½ pint cottage cheese. Keep separate 8 oz. shredded mozzarella cheese and ¼ cup parmesan cheese (optional). In a 9- by 13-inch baking dish, put thin layer of zucchini/sauce mixture, followed by half of the

noodles, all of the egg/cheese mixture and half the mozzarella cheese. Repeat with half the remaining zucchini mixture, remainder of noodles, remaining sauce topped by remaining mozzarella cheese. Sprinkle very top with parmesan cheese, if desired. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Cool 10 minutes and serve. Makes about 8 servings.

B.K. Daugherty-Shri Strattanville

Speedy and spicy: smothered pork

By CAROL MIGHTON-HADDIX

CHICAGO (MCT) — Faced with a can of stewed tomatoes in the cupboard, some frozen pork chops and not much else, I came up with a dish of spicy smothered pork for dinner one night recently after work.

This kind of off-the-cuff cooking happens a lot in my kitchen. Old cans of this or that, hidden packages in the freezer (thank goodness for the microwave's defrost button!) and other assorted food-stuffs find their way into quick week-night meals. Though it is not fancy fare in the least, it has its pleasures.

Serve the pork with a side of corn kernels (maybe sauteed, then moistened with a touch of cream) and a salad of baby romaine. Take your pick for the starch: noodles, or if you have more time, potatoes or polenta.

Tips: Vary the seasoning by using smoked Spanish paprika, found in spice stores or specialty markets.

Make sure not to overcook the pork. Test with a knife; a little pink in the center is OK.

Beverage suggestion: A medium-bodied beer or hard cider would match well to the spices.

SPICY SMOTHERED PORK

Prep: 10 minutes
 Cook: 20 minutes
 Makes 4 servings

2 tablespoons olive oil
 1 small onion, sliced
 3 cloves garlic, minced
 4 boneless pork chops
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 3 tablespoons spicy or sweet paprika
 1/4 teaspoon hot pepper flakes
 or to taste
 2 tablespoons sherry or red wine vinegar

1 can (15 ounces) stewed tomatoes
 Heat oil in large heavy skillet over high heat; add onion. Stir-fry until wilted, 3 minutes. Add garlic; stir-fry 1 minute. Transfer onion and garlic to a plate.

Salt pork. Add to the skillet; brown, 3 minutes per side. Remove pork to a plate. Reduce heat to medium; add paprika and pepper flakes to skillet. Stir in onions and garlic; cook 2 minutes. Add vinegar; cook, stirring, 1 minute. Stir in tomatoes. Cover; cook 3 minutes. Return pork to pan; cover with sauce. Cook until pork is no longer pink in center, 5 minutes.

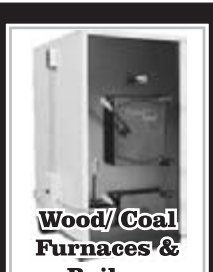
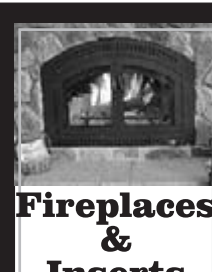
Nutrition information: Per serving: 238 calories, 55 percent of calories from fat, 15 g fat, 4 g saturated fat, 45 mg cholesterol, 12 g carbohydrates, 16 g protein, 572 mg sodium, 3 g fiber

(Carol Mighton-Haddix is a food writer for the Chicago Tribune.)

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