Ricotta & Spinach Cannelloni



Serves: 8
Prep Time: 35 mins
Cook Time: 45 mins (plus 10 months rest)

Ingredients

- 1 kg Montefiore Ricotta, drained if visibly wet
- 600 g baby spinach
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, finely grated or crushed
- 100 g finely grated Parmigiano Reggiano, plus 30 g for topping
- 2 large eggs
- ½ tsp freshly grated nutmeg
- Finely grated zest of 1 lemon
- 1 tsp fine sea salt, plus extra to season sauce
- Freshly cracked black pepper
- 18–20 dried cannelloni tubes (about 300 g)
- 1.2 litres passata
- 150 ml water
- 15 g fresh basil leaves, plus extra to finish
- 150 g mozzarella, grated, for topping

Method

STEP 1

Preheat oven to 190°C conventional / 170°C fan-forced.

STEP 2

Heat olive oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Add garlic and cook for 30 seconds. Add spinach in batches and cook just until wilted, 2–3 minutes.

STEP 3

Transfer spinach to a colander and cool. Squeeze very firmly to remove as much liquid as possible, then chop finely. This step matters: wet spinach makes watery filling.

STEP 4

Combine ricotta, chopped spinach, 100 g Parmigiano, eggs, nutmeg, lemon zest, salt and black pepper. Mix until evenly combined. The filling should be soft enough to pipe but not runny.

STEP 5

Combine passata and water. Season with salt and tear in the basil.

STEP 6

Spread approximately one-third of the tomato sauce over the base of a large 25 × 35 cm baking dish.

STEP 7

Transfer the ricotta filling to a large piping bag. Pipe into both ends of each dry cannelloni tube so the filling reaches the centre without large air gaps.

STEP 8

Arrange the filled cannelloni in one snug layer. Do not stack.

STEP 9

Pour the remaining tomato sauce evenly over the tubes, making sure every piece of exposed pasta is covered. Scatter with 30 g Parmigiano and the grated mozzarella.

STEP 10

Cover tightly with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Remove foil and bake for a further 10–15 minutes, until bubbling, golden and the pasta is tender when pierced with a small knife.

STEP 11

Rest for 10 minutes before serving. Finish with fresh basil.