

## Classic Baked Ziti - The Ultimate Comfort Food Pasta Bake

1 (28 oz) can crushed tomatoes



**OVEN**  
**375°F**

**TIME**  
**8 min**

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### INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound ziti pasta
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 (28 oz) can crushed tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- 1 (15 oz) container ricotta cheese
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese

### DIRECTIONS

- 1.** Preheat Oven: Set oven to 375°F (190°C). Lightly grease or line a 9x13 inch baking dish.
- 2.** Boil Pasta: Cook the ziti in salted boiling water until al dente, about 8 minutes. Drain and set aside.
- 3.** Make the Sauce: Heat olive oil in a large skillet. Add onion and garlic; sauté until soft, about 5 minutes. Add ground beef, cook until browned, then drain excess fat. Stir in crushed tomatoes, basil, oregano, salt, and pepper. Simmer for 10 minutes.
- 4.** Mix Ricotta: In a medium bowl, combine ricotta and beaten egg. Mix until smooth.
- 5.** Assemble: Layer as follows in the baking dish:
- 6.** Half of the cooked ziti
- 7.** Half of the meat sauce
- 8.** Dollops of ricotta mixture
- 9.** Sprinkle half of mozzarella and : Parmesan Repeat layers with the remaining ingredients.
- 10.** Bake: Cover with foil and bake for 25 minutes. Remove foil and bake an additional 10 minutes or until the top is golden and bubbly.

### SWAPS & NOTES

Ground beef: Sub in ground turkey, sausage, or even lentils for a twist.

Ricotta mix: Add fresh chopped basil or Italian seasoning for extra flavor.

Add ½ cup marinara or a splash of red wine to the tomato mix.

Add provolone slices between layers for an extra cheesy stretch.  
? Directions 1.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Undercook the pasta slightly so it doesn't go mushy while baking.

Let it rest for 5-10 minutes before slicing-this helps it hold together.

Make it ahead: Assemble the dish, cover, and refrigerate up to 24 hours before baking.

Broil for the last 2 minutes (just watch it closely!). ?

**More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)**

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/classic-baked-ziti-the-ultimate-comfort-food-pasta-bake/>