

The Ultimate Baked Cream Cheese Spaghetti: A Creamy Twist on a Classic

The Ultimate Baked Cream Cheese Spaghetti: The Comfort Food Mashup You've Been Waiting For



OVEN
350°F

TIME
30 min

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INGREDIENTS

Lean Ground Beef: 1 pound (you can also use Italian sausage for extra kick).

Spaghetti Pasta: 16 ounces (one standard box).

Pasta Sauce: 28 ounces (your favorite jarred variety or homemade).

Cream Cheese: 8 ounces (softened to room temperature).

Garlic Salt: A healthy pinch.

Fresh Garlic: 1 clove, minced.

Italian Seasoning: 1 tsp.

Parmesan Cheese: $\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated.

Mozzarella Cheese: $\frac{1}{2}$ cup shredded (though I won't judge if you use a full cup!).

DIRECTIONS

- 1.** Prep the : Oven and Pasta: Preheat your oven to 350°F. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and cook the spaghetti according to the package directions (aim for al dente, as it will continue to cook in the oven).
- 2.** Brown the : Meat: In a large skillet, brown your ground beef over medium-high heat. Once fully cooked, be sure to drain all the excess fat to keep the casserole from becoming greasy.
- 3.** The : Sauce and Prep: Stir your pasta sauce into the browned beef. While that simmers, drain your spaghetti and place the hot noodles in a large mixing bowl.
- 4.** The : Secret Layer: While the noodles are still hot, add the softened cream cheese, garlic salt, minced garlic, and Italian seasoning. Stir vigorously until the spaghetti is evenly coated and the cream cheese has melted into a silky white sauce.
- 5.** Assemble the : Base: Spread a small amount of the meat sauce into the bottom of a 9x13 casserole dish. This prevents the noodles from sticking. Layer the cream-cheese-coated spaghetti on top.
- 6.** Top it : Off: Spoon the remaining meat sauce over the spaghetti, then sprinkle with the grated parmesan and shredded mozzarella.
- 7.** Bake to : Perfection: Place in the oven for 30 to 35 minutes. You're looking for the cheese to be bubbly and just starting to turn golden brown.
- 8.** Finish and : Serve: Sprinkle a little extra parmesan on top before serving.

SWAPS & NOTES

Protein Swaps: Ground turkey or chicken work beautifully if you want a leaner profile.

For a vegetarian version, swap the beef for sautéed mushrooms and zucchini.

The Cheese: If you want a more complex flavor, try a blend of mozzarella and provolone.

Pasta Shapes: While spaghetti is traditional, penne or rigatoni are great "sauce-catchers" for this creamy base.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Soften the Cream Cheese: This is the most important step.

If the cream cheese is cold, it won't melt smoothly into the pasta and you'll end up with "clumps" instead of a sauce.

Salt the Water: Since we are adding cream cheese, the pasta needs that base layer of salt from the boiling water to balance the richness.

Don't Overcook the Noodles: Boil them for 1-2 minutes less than the box suggests.

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

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