



PERFECT POTLUCK DISH sausage-and-pepper baked ziti

Both kids and adults will dive into this new twist on baked ziti. If you like, assemble it up to a day ahead, refrigerate, and bake just before serving.

Prep 40 minutes plus standing

Bake about 20 minutes

Makes 10 main-dish servings

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sausage-and-pepper baked ziti

- 1½ pounds sweet and/or hot Italian-sausage links, cut crosswise into 1-inch chunks
- 4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 2 large green, yellow, and/or red peppers, cut into ¼-inch slices
- 1 jumbo onion (about 1 pound), cut in half, then cut crosswise into ¼-inch slices
- 1 can (28 ounces) whole tomatoes in puree
- 1 can (15 ounces) tomato puree
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 pound ziti or penne pasta
- 1 package (8 ounces) part-skim mozzarella cheese, cut into ½-inch cubes
- ½ cup freshly grated Pecorino Romano cheese

1. Prepare sauce: In deep nonstick 12-inch skillet, cook sausage over

medium-high heat 5 minutes or until browned on all sides, stirring occasionally.

2. Reduce heat to medium. Discard all but 2 tablespoons sausage fat. To sausage in skillet, add garlic, peppers, and onion, and cook, covered, 10 minutes or until vegetables are tender, stirring occasionally. Stir in tomatoes with their puree, tomato puree, and salt; heat to boiling over medium heat, breaking up tomatoes with side of spoon. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer 10 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 400°F. Heat large covered saucepot of salted water to boiling over high heat. Add pasta; cook 2 minutes less than cooking time recommended on label. ▶

- 4. Drain pasta. Return pasta to pot; stir in sauce to coat. Add mozzarella; toss to combine. Transfer pasta mixture to ungreased 13" by 9" glass or ceramic baking dish and spread evenly; sprinkle with Romano.
- 5. Bake, uncovered, 20 to 25 minutes or until top browns and sauce is bubbling. Let stand 10 minutes for easier serving.

>> Each serving: About 520 calories, 25 g protein, 49 g carbohydrate, 23 g total fat (10 g saturated), 4 g fiber, 65 mg cholesterol, 1,190 mg sodium.