



Lasagna Roll-Ups

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 25 / **Cook Time** 5 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

grate: to reduce food, like a carrot, to very small shreds or pieces of the same size by rubbing it on a tool with an outside surface that has holes with cutting edges (a grater).

knife skills: Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls).

roll: to use a rolling pin to flatten dough; use your hands to form a roll or ball shape; or move a round food, like a grape or a meatball, through another food, like sugar or breadcrumbs, to coat it.

slice: to cut into thin pieces using a sawing motion with your knife.

squeeze: to firmly press or twist a food with fingers, hands, or a device to remove its liquid, like shredded potatoes, frozen and thawed spinach, or tofu.

tear: to pull or rip apart a food, like basil leaves, into pieces instead of cutting with a knife; cutting breaks cell walls more, so herbs can discolor faster.

Equipment

- Oven
- Muffin pan
- Cutting board
- Kid-safe knife
- Paper towels
- Large mixing bowl
- Grater
- Wooden spoon

Ingredients

Lasagna Roll-Ups

- 2 to 3 zucchini, divided
- salt, to sprinkle on sliced zucchini
- olive oil, to grease pan
- 4 oz mozzarella cheese, about 1 C shredded **** (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free mozzarella cheese shreds, like Daiya brand)****
- 1 to 2 basil leaves
- 4 oz ricotta cheese, about 1/2 C **** (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free ricotta or cream cheese)****
- salt and ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 egg **** (Omit for EGG ALLERGY)****
- 12 wonton wrappers, optional **** (for EGG/GLUTEN ALLERGY sub rice paper wrappers, soaked in warm water for 20 secs)****

Food Allergen Substitutions

Lasagna Roll-Ups

Dairy: Substitute dairy-free/nut-free mozzarella cheese shreds, like Daiya brand. Substitute dairy-free/nut-free ricotta or cream cheese.

Egg: Omit egg. Substitute rice paper wrappers for optional wonton wrappers, soaked in warm water for 20 seconds.

Gluten/Wheat: Substitute rice paper wrappers for optional wonton wrappers, soaked in warm water for 20 seconds.

Instructions

Lasagna Roll-Ups

slice + sprinkle

Have your kids slice **1 to 2 zucchini** lengthwise into 1/8-inch-thick slices. Lightly salt the zucchini and set aside for 10 to 15 minutes to let the water "sweat" out. Blot the zucchini dry with paper towels; it should be pliable enough to make the lasagna roll-ups!

preheat + grease

Preheat your oven to 400 F and generously grease the wells of a muffin pan with **olive oil**.

grate + squeeze + tear

Have your kids grate **4 ounces of mozzarella cheese** and add it to a large bowl (setting aside some cheese for the top of the lasagna). Have your kids grate **1 zucchini** and, with clean hands, squeeze the moisture out of the grated zucchini and discard the liquid. Add the squeezed, grated zucchini to the grated cheese. Have your kids tear **1 to 2 basil leaves** and add them to the bowl. Mix well.

measure + crack

Have your kids measure **4 ounces of ricotta cheese** and add it to the bowl. Mix well and add **salt and black pepper** to taste. Crack **1 egg** into the bowl and mix some more!

spoon + roll

Time to make the lasagna roll ups! Have your kids lay a zucchini noodle on a cutting board, add a spoonful of cheese mixture, and spread over the zucchini noodle evenly. Have the kids roll it up and add the roll-ups to your muffin pan. If necessary, cut the roll-ups in half.

wonton option

Alternatively, you can use wonton wrappers instead of the zucchini noodles. Just lay a wonton wrapper on a cutting board, add a spoonful of the cheese mixture and spread it evenly over the wonton wrapper. Have your kids roll up the wonton and place it in the muffin pan. You could even use both zucchini noodles and wonton wrappers!

bake + top + dip

Bake lasagna roll-ups for 3 to 5 minutes in the oven or until bubbly and browned on the edges. While the roll-ups cook, have your kids layer more roll-ups on their cutting board. Kids can tear more basil into little pieces. Top the finished lasagna roll-ups with the extra grated cheese and fresh basil, then dip in **Charred Cherry Tomato Sauce!** "Buon appetito" (Bwohn ap-peh-TEE-toe) or "Enjoy your meal" in Italian!

Featured Ingredient: Basil!

Hi! I'm Basil!

"Ciao (chow)! I'm Basil! But you can also call me Genovese basil (that's Italian, from Genoa). My leaves are usually used fresh, added late in cooking to keep my flavor. If you combine me with olive oil, garlic, pine nuts, and Parmesan cheese, you'll have a yummy, green Italian sauce called "pesto," which is good on pasta. You'll also find me on a delicious but simple pizza from Naples, Italy, called "pizza margherita." Besides fresh basil leaves, Neapolitans (people from Naples) traditionally top this pizza with a tomato sauce from San Marzano tomatoes, fresh mozzarella cheese, a drizzle of olive oil, and a sprinkle of salt. Of course, basil is good in dishes from many countries!"

History

A long time ago, Greeks and Romans believed basil would only grow if you screamed wild curses and shouted while sowing the seeds. They also thought that if you left a basil leaf under a pot, it would turn into a scorpion!

Basil may have originated in India; there are speculations that it originally came from tropical areas spanning from Southeast Asia to Central Africa.

Ancient Egyptians used to use basil to embalm the dead and prepare for burial.

In Italy, basil is considered a token of love, and in Romania, if a girl gives a sprig of basil to her boyfriend, they are engaged.

Anatomy & Etymology

Basil is a part of the mint family. There are 50 to 150 species, including Genovese (Italian) basil (the most common), Thai basil, cinnamon basil, lemon basil, lettuce basil, spicy globe basil, and green ruffles basil! Each type of basil has a unique aroma and taste.

Leaves of the basil plant tend to be oval-shaped, shiny, and smooth-edged. Their edges cup slightly.

Basil plants can grow to be from 8 inches to 4 feet high.

Basil has seeds that can germinate after 10 years!

Basil will grow small flowers that look like spikes at the top of the plant. The flowers are edible, but we generally eat and use just the leaves.

The word "basil" comes from the Greek "vasilikos," which also means "royal." It is believed that basil was once used in royal perfumes.

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Basil grows best in hot climates. When harvesting basil, pinch or cut the leaves at the stem from the top of the plant down. Select a few large leaves rather than snipping the whole stem. Choose leaves that are bright and free from blemishes. Picking leaves encourages the plant to produce more leaves.

You could also try growing basil in a pot on your kitchen window sill, so it's easy to pick what you need when you need it.

Wash basil gently and pat dry. When you buy basil from the store, it will often come with its stems. Trim the ends of the stems and store in a glass of water as you would a bunch of flowers. Basil stores best at room temperature.

Use fresh basil leaves in salads, salad dressings, sauces, pasta, marinades, and sandwiches. Basil leaves in cold water make a nice summer refresher, or add some mint with the leaves to make a digestive hot tea.

Basil can be dried or blanched and frozen. Dried basil enhances the flavor of tomato soup.

Nutrition

Basil contains 98% of our DV of Vitamin K1 in just one-half of a cup! Vitamin K1 is essential for blood clotting. For example, when we get a cut, we need our blood to clot so that the bleeding will stop and our cut will heal.

Basil contains carotenoids—those powerful plant-based nutrients that protect our cells from oxidation (rust) and enhance immunity.

Essential oils found in basil not only give it its aromatic and therapeutic scent but are also anti-inflammatory.

Basil has been shown to act as an adaptogen. Adaptogens are natural substances that help us respond in a healthful way to stress. So the next time you're feeling stressed, grab a handful of basil, hold it to your nose, and breathe in deeply. Then, toss it in your salad and eat it.