



Béchemella

NIBBLEDISH CONTRIBUTOR

Ingredients

Enough to fill a large 20lb disposable foil roasting tray:

- 2lbs Ground Beef/Minced Beef (lean is best)
- 2lbs Penne Pasta
- Tomato Paste, Puree, Sliced/Diced Tomatoes
- One onion
- Garlic and Spices
- 1/2 Pint Milk (2%/semi-skimmed or whole works fine)
- 1 Jumbo Egg or 2 Medium
- 1 tsp English Mustard (optional)
- Plain Flour
- Butter

Instructions

This dish is layered similar to a Lasagna and came from my Egyptian grandmother, which means it might be Turkish or Greek in origin, most likely somewhere Mediterranean, and has three components:

1. The Tomato/Meat Sauce
2. The Pasta
3. The Béchamel Sauce (which gives the dish it's name)

I always start by putting on the water for the pasta, then I make the meat sauce. Cook the pasta as per the box - I suggest to go for the lower time it suggests as you will be putting this in the oven.

The meat sauce is created just like a lasagna/bolognaise sauce:

1. Cut up onion and garlic and put into a large saucepan till softened
2. Add meat and brown
3. I like to add some Lee & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce at this point
4. If you used non-lean meat, drain most of the fat away
5. Add in tomato paste, puree, sliced/diced tomatoes. I usually use a jar of Tomato, Onion and Garlic sauce from the store, add a tsp of ketchup, a can of puree and more worcestershire sauce.
6. Add in spices to your liking
7. Leave on a low heat to simmer till the pasta is done

Next, we start layering the dish, starting with some of the tomato sauce as the fat from the meat will stop it sticking to the pan.

I usually get 2 layers of meat and 2 layers of pasta. You *must* end with pasta.

Next you make the Béchamel sauce, which is essentially a light roux with eggs. The secret is to go slow with the milk and NEVER stop stirring. As you start this stage, you will want to pre-heat your oven to 350-400F/175-200C/Gasmark 4-6

1. Melt some butter in a pan on a med-low heat, I would guesstimate about 2-3 table spoons.
2. Add Flour gradually, till you get almost a ball. If you add too much, add more butter.
3. If you burn it at this stage, start over, it will taste horrible otherwise
4. Add a small drop of milk, say 2 tsps, whisk in
5. keep adding milk slowly, bit by bit, till you get a paste
6. Add the rest of the milk. You want something that has about the consistency of chocolate milk made with the powder ;)
7. Add the egg(s) stirring all the while, otherwise they will poach
8. Add the mustard (optional) it's just for color
9. bring almost to a boil but stop before any bubble start to form
10. Take it off the heat just a little while after it starts to thicken as it will get thicker as it cools

Now pour the Béchamel sauce over the entirety of the dish.

Place dish in the oven from anywhere from 20-40 minutes. You want it golden brown just like in the picture.

Let it sit long enough to cool enough to eat, serve like lasagna.
