

Long Livo

# Million Dollar Spaghetti Casserole Recipe

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| **20 min**<br>Prep time | **45 min**<br>Cook time | **1 h 5 min**<br>Total time |
| **8**<br>Servings | **Easy**<br>Difficulty | **American**<br>Cuisine |

## Ingredients

### For the Casserole

- [ ] 1 lb spaghetti
- [ ] 2 tbsp butter, melted
- [ ] 1 lb lean ground beef
- [ ] 1 large onion, chopped
- [ ] 2 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 1 (28 oz) can crushed tomatoes
- [ ] 1 (8 oz) can tomato sauce
- [ ] 1 tsp Italian seasoning
- [ ] 1 tsp salt, or to taste
- [ ] 1/2 tsp black pepper

### For the Creamy Cheese Layer

- [ ] 8 oz cream cheese, softened
- [ ] 1 cup cottage cheese
- [ ] 1/2 cup sour cream
- [ ] 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

### For the Topping

- [ ] 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- [ ] 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

## Instructions

1. First, let's get things ready. Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C) and lightly grease a 9x13-inch baking dish. Bring a large pot of salted water to a rolling boil and cook the spaghetti until it's just shy of al dente, about a minute less than the package says. You want it to still have a little bite. Once it's done, drain it really well and gently toss it with the melted butter in a large bowl. This little step is my secret; it keeps the noodles from sticking and adds a lovely, subtle richness.

2. Now for the heart of the dish, the sauce. In a large skillet or Dutch oven, cook the ground beef and chopped onion over medium-high heat. As it cooks, use a wooden spoon to break the meat into small crumbles. Continue cooking until the beef is nicely browned and the onion has softened, which usually takes about 8-10 minutes. Go ahead and add the minced garlic and cook for just one more minute until you can smell its wonderful aroma. Be careful not to let the garlic burn, oops. Then, carefully drain off any excess fat from the pan.

3. Let's turn that browned beef into a beautiful sauce. Stir the crushed tomatoes, tomato sauce, Italian seasoning, salt, and pepper right into the skillet with the beef. Bring everything to a lively simmer and then immediately reduce the heat to low. Let it gently bubble away, uncovered, for about 10-15 minutes, stirring it now and then. While it's simmering and the flavors are melding, you can make the creamy cheese filling. In a medium bowl, combine the softened cream cheese, cottage cheese, sour cream, and grated Parmesan cheese until it's all smooth and wonderfully blended.

4 It's time to assemble your masterpiece! Spread half of the buttered spaghetti evenly into the bottom of your prepared baking dish, creating a nice, even layer. Next, carefully spoon and spread the cream cheese mixture over the spaghetti. Top that with the remaining spaghetti. Finally, pour the rich meat sauce all over the top, making sure to cover all the noodles from edge to edge. Sprinkle the shredded mozzarella and cheddar cheese evenly over the sauce. Bake it, uncovered, for 25-30 minutes, or until the cheese is melted, bubbly, and beautifully golden brown. Let it cool for about 10 minutes before serving. This helps it set up so you can get a perfect slice.

## Nutrition per serving

| 580 kcal | 32 g | 45 g | 30 g |
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| Calories | Protein | Carbs | Fat |

### Tips & notes

- Using room temperature cream cheese, cottage cheese, and sour cream will help the filling mix together much more easily and create a smoother texture.
- Don't be afraid to season your meat sauce generously. The pasta and cheese layers are mild, so the sauce needs to have a robust flavor to carry the dish.
- For an extra crispy cheese topping, you can switch the oven to broil for the last 1-2 minutes of cooking. Just watch it very carefully so it doesn't burn!