Tomato Beef and Macaroni Hotdish

One 9×13 in (23×33 cm) dish, at least 3.5 qt/3.3 L; 6 main-dish portions · Active 30 min · Total 1 hr 20 min

Ingredients

- 9 oz dry elbow macaroni (250 g)
- 12 cups water (2.8 L), for pasta
- 1 tablespoon neutral oil (15 ml)
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped (150 g)
- 2 celery stalks, finely diced (100 g)
- 1 lb lean ground beef (450 g)
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped (6 g)
- 1 can crushed tomatoes with juice (14 oz/400 g)
- 1 cup plain tomato passata (250 ml)
- 1/2 cup low-sodium beef stock (120 ml)
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon cider vinegar (5 ml)
- 1/4 teaspoon fine salt (1.5 g)
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 3 1/2 oz cheddar, grated (100 g)

Set out

Oven, 9×13 in (23×33 cm) baking dish, at least 3.5 qt/3.3 L, Large pasta saucepan, at least 5 qt/4.7 L, 12-in/30-cm deep skillet, Colander, Rimmed baking sheet, Food thermometer

Allergens

Wheat, Milk, Celery; check stock labels. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Set the dish on a rimmed sheet. Bring pasta water to a boil.

2. Heat oil in the skillet over medium heat. Cook onion and celery 7–9 minutes until softened. Add beef, raise heat to medium-high and cook 8–10 minutes, breaking it up, until several places reach 160°F (71°C). Safely drain excess fat if needed. Add garlic for 30 seconds.

3. Add crushed tomatoes, passata, stock, oregano, salt and pepper. Simmer 8–10 minutes until the sauce coats the beef but remains moist. Stir in vinegar. Meanwhile boil macaroni for 2 minutes less than its packet time and drain without rinsing.

4. Fold hot macaroni into the sauce. Transfer to the dish and scatter cheddar evenly. Bake 20–25 minutes until the top is lightly golden and the center and several other places reach 165°F (74°C).

5. Rest 5 minutes, then divide into six portions.

Pack a portion, not the hot full pan

For a later lunch, divide leftovers into shallow containers and chill promptly. Carry perishable portions in an insulated bag with two cold sources or move directly into a refrigerator.

A useful detail

The 80-minute total includes preparation, overlapping pasta cooking with the sauce, up to 25 minutes baking and a 5-minute rest. This is not a no-boil pasta recipe; adding dry macaroni would require a different liquid amount and method.

Keep it well

Refrigerate shallow portions within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C), at 40°F (4°C) or below. Use within 3 days or an earlier ingredient deadline. Reheat to 165°F (74°C), adding a little water if pasta has absorbed the sauce. Freeze promptly cooled portions for up to 1 month for quality; thaw in the refrigerator.