Tuna Spinach Ricotta Pasta Shells

12 filled jumbo shells;2 servings of 6 shells and half the sauce · Active 45 min · Total 1 hr 35 min

Skills: Beginner with ordinary kitchen equipment

Ingredients

- 12 jumbo pasta shells (about 120 g dry; nutrition basis 120 g)
- About 8 cups water for shells (2 liters)
- Canned light tuna in water, well drained (160 g edible)
- 3/4 cup plus 1 tablespoon part-skim ricotta (200 g)
- About 4 packed cups spinach, washed (100 g)
- 3/4 can crushed tomatoes with juice (300 g)
- 1 small garlic clove, minced (3 g)
- 1 teaspoon olive oil (5 ml/about 4.5 g)
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano (0.5 g)
- 1/2 teaspoon fine salt (3 g), divided
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper (0.3 g)

Set out

2.5-liter/about 2.5-quart rectangular baking dish, around 8 by 10 by 2 inches/20 by 25 by 5 cm, Large saucepan for shells, Small skillet with lid for spinach and sauce, Colander, Clean sieve for pressing spinach, Mixing bowl, Teaspoon, Clean tray for drained shells, Knife, Kitchen scale, Foil, Food thermometer, Oven mitts

Allergens

Fish (tuna), Milk, Wheat; check pasta for egg or other added allergens. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat the oven to 375°F/190°C. Boil the shell water with half the salt. Add exactly 12 jumbo shells and cook to their packet instructions for a baked dish, often about 9 minutes, until flexible but not completely soft. Drain and spread on a clean tray to cool enough to handle.

2. Meanwhile put washed spinach in the small skillet with the water clinging to its leaves. Cover briefly if needed and cook for 2–3 minutes until wilted. Transfer to a clean sieve, cool enough to handle, press out excess moisture and chop.

3. Heat oil in the same skillet over medium-low heat. Stir garlic for 30 seconds, then add tomatoes, oregano and remaining salt. Simmer gently for 5–7 minutes. Mix drained tuna, ricotta, chopped pressed spinach and pepper in the bowl.

4. Spread one-third of the tomato sauce across the baking dish. Divide all filling into 12 equal portions and spoon one into each shell. Arrange all 12 in the dish and spoon the remaining sauce over and around them. Cover with foil.

5. Bake for 25–30 minutes until the center filling reaches 165°F/74°C. Leave for 5 minutes, then serve 6 shells per person with half the sauce.

A useful kitchen skill

Press cooked greens dry and divide a filling by the actual shell count before stuffing the first one.

A useful detail

Twelve jumbo shells are the actual filling count;120 g is the dry-pasta estimate basis and may differ for your brand. The full raw spinach input is counted despite moisture being pressed out. No extra cheese topping is included.

Keep it well

Refrigerate promptly in shallow containers at 40°F/4°C or below within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C. Use within 2 days. Reheat the required shells and sauce to 165°F/74°C throughout. Freeze individual cooked portions for up to 2 months and thaw in the refrigerator; the filling may soften.