

ZUCCHINI LASAGNA CUP

Serving Size: 12 servings, 1 per student

Ingredients:

- 12 wonton wrappers
- 1 cup part skim ricotta
- 1 zucchini
- 1 cup pasta sauce
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
- 12 muffin tins

PREP BEFORE CLASS:

Preheat oven to 375. Wash zucchini. Spray a muffin tin with cooking spray.

Directions:

1. Mix ricotta, salt, and pepper. Stir until well combined
2. Slice the zucchini into thin slices, about 1/8 inch thick or as thin as possible.
3. Put a wonton wrapper in the muffin tin. Push the center of the wrapper down into the tin, forming a cup. Spoon the ricotta mixture into the wonton cups. Place a zucchini slice on the ricotta and press down slightly. Top with the pasta sauce and mozzarella. You can do another layer of cheese and pasta sauce if your cup has extra room.
4. Bake for 12 minutes. The edges of the exposed wonton wrappers should be golden brown and crisp. To ensure the zucchini softens, cook for as long as possible without burning the wontons.
5. Let the cups cool for 5 minutes before removing from the muffin tin and serving. Enjoy!



CAPRESE SKEWERS WITH BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE

Makes 12 servings, 1 per student

Ingredients:

- 12-24 container of cherry tomatoes
- 12-24 small mozzarella balls
- 12-24 basil leaves
- Cocktail skewers

Dressing: Balsamic Vinaigrette

- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon honey or maple syrup
- 1 garlic clove, grated
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup olive oil

PREP BEFORE CLASS:

Wash tomatoes and basil

Directions:

1. Assemble tomatoes, basil and mozzarella balls on medium-sized cocktail skewer or toothpick.
2. To make balsamic vinaigrette, in a small bowl, whisk together the vinegar, honey, garlic, salt, and several grinds of pepper.
3. Drizzle in the olive oil while whisking and continue to whisk until the dressing is emulsified
4. Drizzle over the caprese skewers. Enjoy!



LESSON 2:

ITALIAN HERBS AND SPICES

SHOPPING LIST

Ingredients to buy:

- 12-24 container of cherry tomatoes
- 1 zucchini
- 1 garlic clove, grated
- 12 wonton wrappers
- 12-24 basil leaves

- 1 cup part skim ricotta
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 12-24 small mozzarella balls
- 1 cup pasta sauce
- Cocktail skewers
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar

Ingredients in the bin:

- salt and pepper
- olive oil
- honey

OBJECTIVES

- Describe common herbs and spices in Italian cuisine
- Understand the process of skewering
- Identify herbs and spices used in today's recipe.

BASIL USES

- Soups and stews: Basil can be added to soups, stews, and tomato-based sauces to enhance the flavor and add freshness.
- Pizza and bruschetta: Basil leaves are commonly used as a topping for pizzas, bruschetta, and other Italian appetizers.
- Infused oils and vinegars: Basil leaves can be used to infuse oils or vinegars, adding a subtle basil flavor to dressings and marinades.

INTRODUCTION

🕒 2-3 min

- Complete Start of Class Checklist (see beginning of the curriculum): arrive early, set up for the class, take attendance, review allergies
- Ask the students to identify the ingredients from both recipes. Have them guess what we might be making today.
- Today we are exploring cuisine from Italy. Ask students if they can name any common Italian ingredients or dishes?
 - Ingredients: flour, tomato, egg, meat and seafood, olive oil
 - Herbs and Spices: basil, garlic, red pepper, rosemary, oregano
 - Dishes: pasta, lasagna, ravioli, minestrone, bruschetta, tiramisu, cannoli
- Italian cuisine is known for its delicious flavors, and herbs and spices play a crucial role in achieving those flavors

DEVELOPMENT

🕒 5-7 min

- What are some Italian dishes you know? Many popular dishes feature herbs and spices, such as pasta, pizza, bruschetta, and caprese salad.
- Some common herbs are basil, which we will talk about more on the next page. But there are more!
 - Oregano, known for its earthy and slightly bitter flavor, is a key ingredient in tomato-based sauces, pizzas, and meat dishes.
 - Rosemary, with its fragrant and pine-like aroma, is often used in roasts, stews, and bread recipes.
 - Garlic is a staple in Italian cooking, providing a robust and pungent flavor to various dishes.
 - Red pepper flakes add a touch of heat and are sprinkled on pizzas and pasta dishes to bring a bit of spiciness.



DEVELOPMENT (CONT.)

- The use of herbs and spices in Italian cooking reflects the culinary traditions and cultural heritage of the country. These flavors have been passed down through generations, representing the authentic essence of Italian cuisine. They bring depth to sauces, soups, and stews, making them more robust and satisfying.

STAR INGREDIENT: BASIL

Pass basil leaves around and have students smell them. Learn more about basil:


- Basil is a culinary herb that is native to tropical regions, particularly in Asia.
- The word "basil" is derived from the Greek word "basileus," which means "king" or "royal," highlighting its regal status among herbs.
- Rich in nutrients: Basil is a good source of vitamins A, K, and C, as well as minerals like calcium, iron, and magnesium.
- Supports digestion: Basil has been known to help soothe the stomach, aid digestion, and reduce bloating and gas.
- Anti-inflammatory properties: Basil contains volatile oils, such as eugenol, that have anti-inflammatory effects, which can help reduce inflammation in the body.
- Boosts the immune system: Basil contains compounds that have antimicrobial properties and may help support the immune system, keeping kids healthier.
- Freshens breath: Chewing on basil leaves can help freshen breath naturally.
- Promotes mental clarity: The aroma of basil has been found to have a calming effect on the mind and can promote mental clarity and focus.

STAR TECHNIQUE: SKEWERING



- Skewering is a cooking technique that involves threading pieces of food onto a skewer before grilling, roasting, or barbecuing. It is a fun and versatile method that kids can enjoy in their cooking adventures.
- Skewering allows you to be creative with the ingredients you choose. You can skewer a variety of foods, including meat (such as chicken, beef, or shrimp), vegetables (such as bell peppers, onions, or cherry tomatoes), and even fruits for a sweet twist. The choice of ingredients is endless, and kids can have fun mixing and matching their favorites.
- Once the skewers are assembled, they can be cooked using various methods such as grilling, roasting in the oven, or even using a stovetop grill pan.

END OF CLASS CHECKLIST

 10 min

- Follow End of Class Checklist (see beginning of the curriculum) and complete Taste Test, Thumbs Up Test, Clean Up & Dismissal