

Jeff's Famous Mushroom Lasagna

Ingredients:

1 large yellow onion
4 garlic cloves
¾# spicy Italian sausage
¾# mild Italian sausage
3 jars (32oz) high quality organic tomato sauce
2 small cans of black olives chopped
2 lbs crimini mushrooms
1 cup dried assorted dried wild mushrooms.
(If some are porcini that would be nice bonus)
13 dried lasagna noodles
8 oz Ricotta cheese
1 lb Mozzarella cheese
8 oz Fontina cheese
Parmesan cheese

Directions:

Place the dried mushrooms in a bowl. Pour hot water over dried mushrooms and submerge placing a mug on top forcing the mushrooms into the water. Sauté sausages until brown. In a separate pan, sauté onion and garlic in olive oil until soft. Add onions to the sausage pan. Sauté mushrooms in the onion pan and cook until soft. Use some white wine if you need liquid. Add mushroom mixture to the sausages. Drain the rehydrated mushrooms reserving the liquid for the sauce.

Dice the wild mushrooms and add to the sauce along with the mushroom rehydrating liquid. Add sauce to the pan, along with the olives and let the mixture simmer until all the flavors are incorporated and thickened. Season with your favorite Italian spices. The sauce can be prepared the night before if you want.

Cook the lasagna noodles in boiling salted water. When the noodles are done, drain and rinse with cold water. It makes it easier to handle and you won't scald your hands. Lay them on a rack to drain. The cold water also helps keep the cooked noodles from sticking together. Grate the two cheeses.

To Assemble: Start with a layer of sauce. Place a layer of noodles on the sauce (3) and another (4) on their edge around the perimeter of the lasagna dish. Spread one third of the mozzarella, fontina, and ricotta cheeses on the noodles. Place a third of the remaining sauce on the cheese pushing to the edges of the pan with the back of a spoon. Grate a dusting of Parmesan onto the sauce. Add a second layer of noodles (3) followed by half the remaining three cheeses and half of the remaining sauce followed by another dusting of Parmesan. Add the last layer of noodles and the remaining cheese followed by the last of the sauce and a generous dusting of Parmesan. Cover with foil and bake at 375 for 45 minutes. I like to take the foil off for the last ten minutes and let the top golden up a bit. Let stand for 20-30 minutes to cool and set before trying to slice and serve.

Inspired by Jeff's Dad's favorite Pizza!

Wines Coming in May!

2017 "R" Syrah, Paso Robles

2017 "R" Petit Verdot, Damir Ranch, Stanislaus

2016 "R" Tannat, Silvaspoons Vineyard, Lodi

2017 "R" Carignane, Aparicio Vyd., Amador

Enjoy with a glass of "R" Primitivo



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2017 "R" Tempranillo, Liberty Oaks, Lodi

Tempranillo is the most widely planted red grape in Spain. It is often referred to as the 'Royal' or 'Noble' grape of Spain. Tempranillo has also seen success throughout the world and can be found in the South of France, Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, Portugal, Oregon, Washington and California. In Spain, Tempranillo is produced in four styles differentiated primarily by the length and type of aging. The lightest is Roble or Tinto which receives little to no oak aging and is brought to the market soon after the vintage. Crianza sees 6-12 months in barrel and Reserva at least 12 months in barrel followed by up to two years in the bottle. Gran Reserva is aged in barrel for 18-24 months and up to four years in the bottle. We produce two Tempranillos. The Liberty Oaks wine from Lodi is done in the Crianza style and the Shake Ridge Ranch wine from Amador is closer to the Reserva style.

The Liberty Oaks Tempranillo comes from a vineyard in the Jahant district of Lodi and the grower is Markus Bokisch. Markus spent his childhood summers in Catalonia, and after working at Joseph Phelps Winery in Napa, he and his wife, Liz, made a commitment to the Lodi appellation where he feels the soil and climate is especially well suited to Spanish varieties. Tempranillo is an early ripening variety that can have neutral characteristics and is often low in acidity. To add some zest, brightness, and to deepen the color of our offering, we blended in 19% of another Spanish variety, also from Markus; Graciano.

The 2017 Tempranillo has garnet color of moderate depth with luminescent hues. Dusty roadside raspberry, briary blackberry and plums are the featured players in the aroma. Ten months in small oak barrels provides subtle whiffs of oak, smoke and ash to the bouquet. The featured flavors of bright black raspberry and dark cherry along with toasted oak are delivered by a wine with a soft creamy texture. True to the Crianza style this is a smooth elegant wine with mild to non-existent tannins, the oak is unobtrusive, and the fruit is juicy and fresh. For someone new to the world of red wine I would find it hard to find a better introduction.

Varietal Composition: 81% Tempranillo 19% Graciano 13.9% Alc. 0.59 g/100ml TA 3.50 pH
Oak Regime: 35% American Oak 48% French Oak 15% Neutral Oak

Released: March 1, 2019 469 Cases Produced ***Suggested Retail Price: \$27.00 / Club Price \$22.95 / SME2 Price \$21.60***

2017 "R" Primitivo, Nostro Vino Vineyard, Amador County

Over twenty years ago, Tom Dillian called and asked me if I had any interested in Primitivo. He had just been offered some vines from a nursery but didn't want to plant the grapes if there wasn't anyone interested in buying the fruit. At the time, we didn't really know much about Primitivo, but my curiosity was tickled and I said yes. Since then we have learned that genetically Primitivo and Zinfandel share the same DNA profile with the original Zinfandel; Crljenak and Trigidrag found growing in Croatia. I must confess that in the early years I didn't notice much difference in the wines we produced from Tom's Zinfandel (Nostro Vino) and the Primitivo. But lately the Primitivo has distinguished itself by producing a softer prettier wine with succulent red fruits and mild slightly chalky tannins. If you are looking for a fresh bright style of Zinfandel this Primitivo is for you.

The 2017 Primitivo has a ruby purple color with better than average depth for Primitivo. The edges of the wine are bright and youthful with just a hint of a carmine hue. The aromas lift well from the glass and feature fresh red raspberries, strawberry and cherry. This is a fruit driven wine with no suggestion of plum, prune, or raisin. We have let the age of the barrels used for Primitivo lengthen. Some of you may have noticed the percentage of neutral barrels (2 years or older) used to age the Primitivo has crept up to almost 25%. Despite our effort to reel in the oak a bit there is a significant bouquet of vanilla, hazelnut, with a hint of clove and allspice to frame the fresh juicy fruit. On the palate, succulent flavors of ripe red fruits blend with those of mocha and toasted oak on a medium bodied wine. The fruit flavors transition seamlessly to a long lingering finish featuring mild tannins that are mature and well integrated. This is an easy drinking Zinfandel ideal for pastas and pizza.

Varietal Composition: 100% Primitivo 14.1% Alc. 0.72 g/100ml TA 3.46 pH
Oak Regime: 41% American Oak 36% French Oak 23% Neutral Oak

Released: March 1, 2019 519 Cases Produced ***Suggested Retail Price: \$27.00 / Club Price \$22.95 / SME2 Price \$21.60***