



## **Spinach and Ricotta Macaroni Cheesecake 8 servings**

### **Ingredients**

1 lb uncooked elbow macaroni  
1 package (10 oz) frozen chopped spinach, thawed, drained and squeezed dry  
1 cup whole milk ricotta cheese  
4 oz cream cheese, softened  
1/2 cup shredded mozzarella cheese (2 oz)  
6 eggs  
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
1 1/4 teaspoons salt  
1/4 teaspoon pepper  
1 jar (25.5 oz) Muir Glen™ organic tomato basil pasta sauce  
1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese  
16 cooked meatballs

### **Steps**

- 1 Heat oven to 325°F. Spray 9-inch springform pan with cooking spray. Wrap outside bottom and side of pan with foil to prevent leaking.
- 2 Cook and drain macaroni as directed on package.
- 3 Meanwhile, in medium bowl, mix spinach, ricotta cheese, cream cheese, mozzarella cheese, 1 egg, 1 clove garlic, 1/2 teaspoon of the salt and the pepper.
- 4 In large bowl, mix macaroni, 1 1/2 cups of the pasta sauce, 1/2 cup of the Parmesan cheese, remaining 2 cloves garlic and remaining 3/4 teaspoon salt. In small bowl, lightly beat remaining 5 eggs, and stir into macaroni mixture.
- 5 Place one-third of the macaroni mixture in bottom of pan. Gently spread ricotta filling in middle of macaroni mixture, leaving 1-inch border around edge. Spoon remaining macaroni mixture around edges and on top of ricotta filling. Ricotta filling should be completely enclosed by macaroni mixture.

- 6 Bake until firm to the touch and top is golden brown, about 1 hour and 5 minutes to 1 hour and 20 minutes (at least 165°F). Place on cooling rack; let stand 5 minutes. Run thin knife around edge to loosen. Remove side of springform pan. Let cool 15 minutes.
- 7 Meanwhile, heat meatballs as directed on package. Heat remaining sauce in 3-quart saucepan. Add 1/2 cup of the heated pasta sauce to meatballs; toss to coat.
- 8 Just before serving, transfer baked macaroni to serving platter; place heated meatballs around top edge. Spoon remaining sauce in middle of top of “cheesecake.” Sprinkle remaining 2 tablespoons Parmesan cheese over top of “cheesecake.” Cut in slices to serve with more Parmesan cheese on the side, if desired.

**TIP**

- Letting the “cheesecake” stand for 15 minutes before serving allows the pasta and eggs to set firmly enough to provide the necessary structure for this dish