



Freezer-friendly **creamy crab manicotti** - make one and freeze one!

Ingredients

•For the Bechamel Sauce:

- 5 Tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 4 cups whole milk
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp fresh ground pepper
- pinch of fresh grated nutmeg

•For the Manicotti:

- 1 box Manicotti pasta shells (12-15 count)
- 1 cup whole-milk ricotta cheese
- 1 cup grated Parmigiano-Regiano cheese, divided
- 1 egg
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh basil (I used dry) (I also used a pinch of oregano)
- 2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley, plus more for garnish (I used dry)
- 1 lb lump crab meat, inspected for shell pieces
 - 2 tablespoons of minced garlic
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp fresh ground pepper

Instructions (I used a jar of Alfredo Sauce and added 1/2 cup milk to it)

1. To make the bechamel sauce, melt the butter over medium heat.
2. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, about 1 minutes. Whisk in the flour and cook for 2 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Add the milk one cup at a time, whisking until completely smooth after each addition.

4. Whisk in salt, pepper, and nutmeg, and cook until thickened, about 10 minutes (do not boil).
5. Preheat the oven to 375.
6. Butter or spray a 9x13 baking dish or (2 8x8) with non-stick spray and put 1 cup of bechamel sauce in the bottom.
7. Cook the pasta shells in salted water until tender but still firm, about 8-10 minutes. Drain. Run cold water over drained shells.
Pour a little olive oil in your hands and gently toss the shells so they won't stick together.
8. In a large bowl, mix the ricotta, 3/4 cup cheese, egg, basil, parsley, crab, minced garlic, salt, and pepper until well combined.
9. Fill the pasta shells with the crab mixture and place in the prepared baking dish.
10. Top the filled manicotti with 2-3 cups of the bechamel sauce and sprinkle with remaining cheese. Bake 15-20 minutes, until bubbly and top is golden brown. Garnish with fresh parsley and serve.
11. To freeze: Prepare as instructed and freeze. To reheat, let thaw in the fridge overnight and bake until bubbly and hot throughout.