

Spinach Manicotti

Ingredients

- 1 carton (15 ounces) low fat ricotta cheese
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese, **divided**
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen chopped spinach, (thawed and squeezed dry, eliminate as much water as possible).
- ½ cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 1/3 cup dry bread crumbs
- 2 tablespoon Italian seasoning
- 2 tsp Oregano, dry
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1-2 teaspoons cayenne pepper, optional
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 2 cups tomato juice, I recommend V8
- 1 cup chunky salsa, your favorite brand
- 1 can (15 ounces) crushed tomatoes, or crush them yourself
- 14 uncooked manicotti shells (1 box)

- I typically purchase two boxes of shells just as a precautionary. Sometimes there are broken shells in the box and if you break some yourself.

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, combine the ricotta, *1-1/2 cups* mozzarella cheese, spinach, sour cream, bread crumbs, Italian seasoning, oregano, cayenne pepper, garlic powder and onion powder.

Combine the tomato juice, salsa and crushed tomatoes; spread 1 cup sauce in an ungreased 13-in. x 9-in. baking dish. Stuff or pipe using a pastry bag or heavy re-sealable bag into the uncooked manicotti with spinach mixture; arrange over sauce. Pour remaining sauce over manicotti. Cover and bake at 350° for 55 minutes. Uncover; sprinkle with remaining mozzarella cheese. Bake 15 minutes longer or until cheese melts and browned if you choose.

