

VEGAN BAKED ZITI (all whole food & oil free). See <https://thevegan8.com/amazing-vegan-baked-ziti/>

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup (120g) cooked, peeled and mashed potato (I used gold potato)
- 1 cup (145g) raw cashews (see Notes)
- 3/4 cup (180g) water
- 2 tablespoons (30g) fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon fine salt
- 1 lb ziti or penne pasta (use gluten-free if needed)
- 4 cups (960g) marinara sauce or pizza sauce. Make sure to use a smooth sauce.
- 2 tablespoons Italian seasoning
- 1 cup (25g) fresh basil leaves only, finely chopped
- 1/4 - 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional only if you want a spicy kick)
- 1 batch of my homemade lemon parmesan cheese. (Do not pre-bake it as recipe instructs.)

INSTRUCTIONS (Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.)

- 1) Have pizza sauce ready to go. If using Vegan 8's Lemon Parmesan Cheese, make it now but do not pre-bake it.
- 2) Cook the pasta until al dente, making sure to salt the pasta water well. Be careful not to overcook, as it will still cook some in the oven. If using gluten-free, keep in mind that gluten-free pasta tends to cook faster and can turn mushy, so follow the box directions carefully.
- 3) While the pasta is cooking, make the creamy garlic lemon cheese sauce first. If you don't have a high-powered blender, soak the cashews overnight or boil them to get them really soft. Drain, rinse and proceed. Add the cooked and peeled, mashed potato (measuring 120 grams) to a high-powered blender or food processor. Add the cooked and peeled, mashed potato, salt and blend until 100% creamy and smooth. Scrape the sides as needed
- 4) Drain the cooked pasta, rinse briefly. Add to a HUGE bowl (or pot) to mix everything. This makes a TONI!
- 5) To the same bowl, add the pizza/marinara sauce, Italian seasoning, chopped fresh basil and red pepper flakes (if using)
- 6) Pour the pasta mixture into a 9x13 casserole dish and spread out evenly.
- 7) Drizzle the cheese garlic sauce all over the pasta and stir it around gently, but don't mix it fully in. You just want to stir from the bottom and around a bit to evenly disperse the cheese throughout, while leaving some large spoonfuls showing on top.
- 8) Sprinkle the lemon parmesan cheese mixture all over the top of the casserole. This adds amazing color, texture and a wonderful zing of cheesy lemon flavor!
- 9) Bake at 400°F for 15-20 minutes until you can see it bubbling through the sides (I used a glass casserole dish, so this was easy to spot) and the top is turning golden brown. Mine was perfect at 18 minutes. Top with extra fresh basil, if desired.

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