

Creamy Italian Sausage Ditalini Soup Recipe

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This **Creamy Italian Sausage Ditalini Soup with Cannellini Beans** is Italian comfort in a bowl – hearty, rich, and full of flavor. It combines tender ditalini pasta, creamy white beans, savory sausage, and a touch of cream for the perfect weeknight meal.

When times were lean, my mom would make a simpler version of this soup without any meat – just beans, pasta, and vegetables simmered in broth. It was humble, nourishing, and filled with love. Over time, I've added Italian sausage and cream for a heartier twist, but the essence of that comforting bowl she made remains the same.

Think of it as a cross between classic *pasta e fagioli* and a creamy Tuscan-style soup – rustic, cozy, ready in just 30 minutes and made in one pan.

Things to know about this Creamy Italian Sausage Ditalini Soup Recipe

- **Cannellini beans:** These creamy white beans are a classic Italian pantry staple. They add protein, fiber, and a naturally velvety texture that makes the soup satisfying – even without meat. If you're keeping it traditional, mash a few beans with the back of your spoon while

simmering to naturally thicken the broth.

- **When times were lean:** Just like my mom did, you can easily skip the sausage and make this as a simple, meatless bean and pasta soup. It's humble, nourishing, and deeply comforting – proof that Italian cooking is about love and resourcefulness, not fancy ingredients.
- **Cooking the pasta:** Ditalini works beautifully because it's small and sturdy, but it can continue to absorb liquid as it sits. If you're planning to store leftovers, cook the pasta separately and add it just before serving to keep the texture perfect.
- **Broth and consistency:** For a thicker soup, reduce the amount of broth slightly or simmer uncovered for a few extra minutes. For a lighter consistency, add more broth or water before serving.
- **Cheese options:** Parmesan gives a savory richness, but you can also stir in a spoonful of ricotta or a sprinkle of pecorino Romano for a sharper bite.

▪ Variations

- **Vegetarian version:** Omit the sausage and use vegetable broth. Add extra beans or chopped mushrooms for a hearty texture.
- **Tuscan twist:** Add chopped sun-dried tomatoes, a splash of white wine, and a few fresh basil leaves at the end for brightness.
- **Spicy version:** Use spicy Italian sausage and increase the red pepper flakes for a little kick.
- **Greens galore:** Swap spinach for kale, escarole, or even Swiss chard – whichever you have on hand.

- **Dairy-free:** Skip the cream and add an extra cup of broth; the beans will still make the soup naturally creamy.
- **Rustic style:** Blend half the soup with an immersion blender, then stir it back in – a trick that creates a naturally thick, velvety consistency without losing texture.
- If you loved this **Creamy Italian Sausage Ditalini Soup**, you'll also enjoy exploring more of my cozy Italian recipes:
 - Try my Classic Pasta e Fagioli Soup for another hearty bean and pasta dish.
 - Check out the Creamy Tortellini Soup – a rich and cheesy twist on Italian comfort food.
 - For a simple weeknight dinner, see my Gnocchi lasagna soup

Don't forget to **save this recipe** and **share your creation** with me on Instagram – tag **@lorianasheacooks** so I can see your delicious bowls of comfort!





Creamy Italian Sausage Ditalini Soup Recipe

Cook Time & Servings

- **Prep time:** 10 minutes
- **Cook time:** 25 minutes
- **Serves:** 4–6

Ingredients

- 2 Tbsp. Olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2 carrots, diced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ pound Italian sausage (mild or spicy), casings removed
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 1 cup water (or more for desired consistency)
- 1 cup ditalini pasta
- 1 (15-ounce) can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (14-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1 cup heavy cream (or half-and-half for a lighter option)

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 cups baby spinach (or chopped kale)
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. Sauté the vegetables:

Heat olive oil in a large soup pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add onion, carrots, and celery; cook until softened, about 5–7 minutes. Add garlic and cook 1 minute longer.

2. Brown the sausage:

Add the sausage and cook until browned, breaking it up with a spoon. Drain any excess fat.

3. Add flavor and liquid:

Stir in Italian seasoning and crushed red pepper flakes. Add the tomatoes, cannellini beans, chicken broth, and water. Bring to a gentle boil. Simmer for 10 minutes

4. Cook the pasta:

Add ditalini pasta and cook until al dente, about 6-8 minutes, stirring occasionally.

5. Make it creamy:

Reduce heat to low. Stir in the heavy cream, Parmesan cheese, and spinach. Simmer gently until the spinach wilts and the soup thickens slightly, 2–3 minutes.

6. Taste and serve:

Season with salt and black pepper. Serve warm with extra Parmesan and crusty Italian bread

Baked Spaghetti Squash with Tomato Sauce and Cheese

Baked Spaghetti Squash with Tomato Sauce and Cheese

When you're craving something cozy yet light, this baked spaghetti squash hits the spot. The squash is roasted until tender, then topped with a rich tomato sauce, shredded mozzarella, and grated parmesan before being baked again until bubbly and golden. It's a beautiful Italian-inspired dish that's simple enough for a weeknight but feels special enough for Sunday dinner.

Things to know about this Baked Spaghetti Squash with Tomato Sauce and Cheese

- **Avoid watery squash:** After roasting, let the squash sit cut side up for a few minutes to release steam before adding sauce. This helps prevent extra moisture.
- **Shortcut tip:** You can microwave the squash for 10–12 minutes if you're short on time – it won't be as caramelized, but it still works beautifully.
- **Make-ahead friendly:** Roast the squash and prepare the sauce a day ahead. When ready to serve, assemble, top with cheese, and rebake until hot and bubbly.

Variations

- **Add protein:** Mix in cooked Italian sausage, ground turkey, or chicken for a heartier version.
- **Creamy twist:** Add a few spoonfuls of ricotta cheese before re baking for a creamy, lasagna-style flavor.
- **Pesto lovers:** Drizzle with homemade basil pesto before serving for an herby burst of freshness.
- **Spicy kick:** Add a pinch of red pepper flakes to the sauce for a little heat.
- Craving more Italian-inspired comfort food?
Check out my **Gnocchi Lasagna Soup** or **Creamy Mushroom Chicken** next!





Baked Spaghetti Squash with Tomato Sauce

and Cheese

Servings: 4

Cook Time: About 1 hour

Ingredients

- 1 medium **spaghetti squash** (about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ –3 pounds)
- 2 tablespoons **zx** divided
- **Salt and freshly ground black pepper**, to taste
- 2 cups tomato **sauce**
- 2 cloves **garlic**, minced
- 1 teaspoon **dried oregano**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup **fresh basil**, chopped (plus extra for garnish)
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups **shredded mozzarella cheese**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup **grated parmesan cheese**

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven:

Preheat your oven to **400°F (200°C)**. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. Prepare the squash:

Carefully cut the spaghetti squash in half crosswise and scoop out the seeds. Drizzle the inside with **1 tablespoon olive oil**, then season with **salt and pepper**. Place cut side down on the prepared baking sheet.

3. Roast:

Bake for **35–40 minutes**, or until the flesh is tender and easily pulls into strands with a fork. Remove from the oven and let cool slightly.

4. Make the sauce:

While the squash roasts, heat **1 tablespoon olive oil** in a medium size pan over medium heat. Add **garlic** and cook until fragrant, about **1 minute**. Stir in **tomato sauce**, **oregano**, and **basil**. Simmer for **10–15 minutes**, then season with salt and pepper to taste.

5. Combine:

Once the squash is cool enough to handle, use a fork to shred the flesh into spaghetti-like strands. Leave the strands in the shell halves or transfer them to a baking dish. Spoon the **tomato sauce** evenly over the squash and toss gently to combine.

6. Add cheese and rebake:

Top each half (or the baking dish) with **shredded mozzarella** and **grated parmesan**. Return to the oven and bake for **10–15 minutes**, until the cheese is melted and golden.

7. Serve:

Garnish with fresh basil and an extra drizzle of olive oil. Serve hot, right from the shell for a rustic presentation or plated for a cozy Italian-inspired meal

Roasted Delicata Squash Oreganata

Roasted Delicata Squash Oreganata

I love when simple seasonal ingredients can shine with just a few Italian touches. This **Roasted Delicata Squash Oreganata** is my twist on a classic southern Italian preparation, where “oreganata” means seasoned with oregano, garlic, breadcrumbs, and good olive oil. The result is golden, tender squash with a crispy, flavorful topping – the perfect cozy side dish for fall dinners or holiday tables.

Things to know about this Roasted Delicata Squash Oreganata

One of the best things about delicata squash is that you don't have to peel it – the skin is completely edible and turns tender and slightly crisp when roasted. That makes this recipe not only delicious but also incredibly easy to prepare. Look for delicata squash with firm, unblemished skin and a creamy yellow color with green stripes; that's a sign it's perfectly ripe and full of flavor.

Because delicata is naturally sweet, it pairs beautifully with the savory oreganata topping – a mix of breadcrumbs, Parmesan, garlic, and herbs that gives every bite a golden crunch. You can prepare the squash ahead of time and reheat it in the oven just before serving, making it a great make-ahead side dish for gatherings or holiday meals. And if you want to make it your own, try adding a sprinkle of crushed red pepper flakes

for a touch of heat or a squeeze of lemon juice for brightness just before serving.

Love cozy fall flavors? Try my Roasted Butternut Squash soup or Italian cauliflower al forno next – both bring that same rich, comforting sweetness of the season to your table.





Roasted Delicata Squash Oreganata

Servings: 4

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 medium delicata squash
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup plain breadcrumbs
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. dried oregano
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. **Preheat the oven:** Set your oven to 400°F (200°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. **Prepare the squash:** Slice each delicata squash in half lengthwise. Scoop out the seeds, then cut into ½-inch thick half-moons.
3. **Season:** In a large bowl, toss the squash with olive oil, salt, and pepper until evenly coated.
4. **Make the oreganata mixture:** In a small bowl, combine breadcrumbs, Parmesan, garlic, parsley, and oregano.

Stir well to mix.

5. **Coat the squash:** Arrange the squash slices on the prepared baking sheet in a single layer. Sprinkle the breadcrumb mixture evenly over the top, pressing gently so it adheres.
6. **Roast:** Bake for 20–25 minutes, turning halfway through, until the squash is tender and the topping is golden and crispy.
7. **Serve:** Transfer to a serving platter and garnish with a little extra parsley or Parmesan if desired. Serve warm

Italian Cauliflower al Forno

Italian Cauliflower al Forno

I've always loved cauliflower – it's one of those vegetables that doesn't get nearly enough credit. Too often it's overlooked, but with a little Italian flair, it turns into something truly special. This **Cauliflower al Forno** is proof that simple ingredients can make magic. Roasted until golden, then baked in layers of rich marinara, creamy béchamel, and melted cheese, it's cozy, comforting, and completely irresistible. Whether you serve it as a side or a vegetarian main, this dish will make anyone rethink how delicious cauliflower can be.

Things to know about this Italian Cauliflower al Forno

- **Make ahead:** You can roast the cauliflower and even assemble the dish a day in advance. Just cover and refrigerate, then bake when ready to serve.
- **Reheating:** Warm leftovers in the oven at 350°F until bubbly, or reheat individual portions in the air fryer for a crisp top.
- **Serving idea:** Pair it with a simple green salad, crusty bread, or even over a scoop of creamy polenta for a full meal.
- **Storage:** Keeps well up to 3 days in the fridge – the flavors get even better as they mingle.

• Variations

- **Add Italian sausage:** Brown mild or spicy Italian sausage and scatter it over the roasted cauliflower before baking for extra heartiness.
- **Use other veggies:** Try mixing in roasted zucchini, bell peppers, or mushrooms for more texture and flavor.
- **Make it spicy:** Add a pinch of red pepper flakes to your Easy Marinara Sauce for a little kick.
- **Go cheesy:** Add a layer of ricotta or burrata before topping with mozzarella for an extra creamy version.
- **Lighter option:** Skip the béchamel and just use Easy Marinara Sauce – it's still delicious and a bit lighter.

- If you love this comforting Italian-style cauliflower bake, be sure to try my **Homemade Béchamel Sauce** and **Easy Marinara Sauce** – both add incredible depth and flavor to any baked pasta or veggie dish.

Craving more cozy Italian comfort food? Check out my **Mushroom Sausage Sauce Polenta** or **Creamy Italian Sausage Risotto** next!





. Italian Cauliflower al Forno

Servings: 4-6

Cook Time: 45 minutes

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 medium cauliflower, cut into florets
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried thyme or rosemary (optional)
- 2 cups **Easy Marinara Sauce** – use your homemade or store-bought favorite
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup **Homemade Béchamel Sauce**
- Fresh basil or parsley for garnish

- **Béchamel Sauce**
 - 2 tbsp butter
 - 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
 - $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups milk
 - Pinch of nutmeg
 - Salt and pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. **Preheat the oven:** 400°F (200°C).

2. Roast the cauliflower:

- Toss cauliflower florets with olive oil, salt, pepper, oregano, and thyme.
- Spread on a baking sheet and roast for 20 minutes until slightly golden.

3. Make the béchamel sauce

- In a small saucepan, melt butter over medium heat.
- Stir in flour and cook 1–2 minutes until lightly golden.
- Gradually whisk in milk, stirring constantly until thickened.
- Season with salt, pepper, and a pinch of nutmeg.

4. Assemble the dish:

- In a baking dish, spread a thin layer of tomato sauce.
- Arrange roasted cauliflower on top.
- Drizzle with béchamel sauce
- Pour remaining tomato sauce over the cauliflower.
- Sprinkle mozzarella and Parmesan evenly on top.

5. Bake: 20–25 minutes until bubbly and golden on top.

6. Garnish and serve: Sprinkle with fresh basil or parsley before serving.

Italian Sausage and Potatoes (Stovetop Pan Recipe)

Italian Sausage and Potatoes (Stovetop Pan Recipe)

This Italian Sausage and Potatoes stovetop recipe is the kind of hearty, rustic meal that never goes out of style. Juicy sausage links, tender golden potatoes, sweet peppers, and onions all cook together in one pan, creating incredible flavor with minimal effort. It's perfect for busy weeknights when you crave something comforting, homey, and truly satisfying.

Things to know about this Italian Sausage and Potatoes (Stovetop Pan Recipe)

- **Quality matters:** Use good-quality Italian sausage – sweet, mild, or hot. The sausage you choose sets the tone for the whole dish. If you can find butcher-fresh or locally made sausage, even better.
- **Don't rush the browning:** Let the sausage get a deep golden crust before removing it from the pan. Those browned bits (fond) are what give the peppers and potatoes their rich, savory flavor once deglazed.
- **Deglaze smart:** A splash of **white wine** adds a subtle acidity that brightens everything up, while **chicken broth** keeps it mild and comforting. Either works beautifully.

- **Make it spicy:** Add more crushed red pepper flakes or use **hot Italian sausage** for an extra kick.
- **Add a tomato twist:** Stir in a few spoonful's of **crushed tomatoes or tomato paste** when you deglaze for a more saucy, southern Italian-style version.
- **Try different potatoes:** Yukon golds stay creamy inside and crisp outside, while red potatoes hold their shape nicely. Even small baby potatoes (halved) work great.
- **Vegetable boost:** Toss in zucchini slices, cherry tomatoes, or baby spinach at the end for a colorful, veggie-packed twist.
- **Meal prep tip:** This dish reheats beautifully – store leftovers in an airtight container and rewarm them in a skillet for that freshly cooked flavor.

▪ **Craving More Rustic Italian Comfort?**

If you loved this **Italian Sausage and Potatoes (Stovetop Pan Recipe)**, try a few more of my classic Italian comfort dishes:

- Italian Sausage and Mushroom Risotto – creamy, cozy, and full of flavor.
- Roasted butternut squash soup – a seasonal one-pot favorite.
- creamy Italian pan chicken and potatoes – Easy, quick and delicious
- Creamy Sausage Tortellini Soup – rich, comforting, and perfect for colder days.

Don't forget to **leave a comment** below if you make this recipe – I'd love to hear how it turned out in your kitchen!





Italian Sausage and Potatoes (Stovetop Pan Recipe)

Serves: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients

- 4 Italian sausage links (sweet, mild, or hot)
- 4-5 potatoes (Yukon gold or russet), cut into circles
- 2 bell peppers (red, yellow, or green), cut into dice
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- Fresh chopped Italian parsley, (for garnish)

Instructions

1. Brown the sausage:

Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large deep skillet over medium heat. Add the sausage links and cook until browned on all sides and mostly cooked through, about 8–10 minutes. Remove from the pan and set aside to cool slightly.

2. Slice the sausage:

Once cool enough to handle, slice the sausage into 1-inch pieces and set aside.

3. Cook the vegetables:

In the same pan (don't wipe it out – those brown bits add flavor!), add the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Add the onions, bell peppers, and potatoes. Season with salt and pepper, and cook over medium heat until

the potatoes start to soften and everything begins to caramelize, about 10–12 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for another 30 seconds.

4. Deglaze the pan:

Pour in the chicken broth or white wine, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom. Let it simmer for 1–2 minutes.

5. Combine everything:

Return the sliced sausage to the skillet. Sprinkle in the oregano, basil, and crushed red pepper flakes. Stir well to combine, cover partially, and cook for another 5–5 minutes, until the potatoes are tender, the sausage is fully cooked and everything is infused with flavor.

6. Finish and serve:

Taste and adjust seasoning with more salt and pepper if needed. Garnish with fresh Italian chopped parsley and serve hot. ENJOY!!!

Italian Roasted Delicata Squash for Salads

Italian Roasted Delicata Squash for Salads

Fall flavors don't get much better than this: golden roasted delicata squash paired with peppery arugula, crunchy pumpkin seeds, and nutty shaved Parmesan. Tossed in a creamy Sicilian-

inspired dressing, this salad is simple, rustic, and full of cozy Italian charm. Best of all? You don't need to peel the squash – the tender skin adds color, texture, and flavor that makes every bite irresistible. Whether you're serving it as a side or a light meal, it's the perfect way to celebrate seasonal produce with a touch of Italian flair.

Things to know about this Italian Roasted Delicata Squash for Salads

- **No Peeling Needed:** The skin of delicata squash is thin and tender when roasted, so it's completely edible and adds lovely texture.
- **Roasting Brings Out Natural Sweetness:** Roasting caramelizes the edges of the squash, enhancing its nutty, sweet flavor – perfect for balancing the peppery arugula and savory Parmesan.
- **Flexible Salad Base:** This roasted squash works beautifully in salads, grain bowls, or even as a side dish for Italian mains like chicken or sausage.
- **Pumpkin Seeds Add Crunch:** Toasted pumpkin seeds (pepitas) provide a satisfying crunch and a subtle nutty flavor that complements the roasted squash.
- **Creamy Sicilian Dressing:** The dressing is tangy, garlicky, and creamy – it ties the salad together while keeping it light and fresh.
- **Make Ahead:** You can roast the squash a day ahead – just toss it with the dressing right before serving so the arugula stays crisp.
- **Seasonal & Healthy:** This salad is packed with seasonal fall flavors, making it a nutritious, colorful, and Italian-inspired dish for any table.

- Try this roasted delicata squash salad today and bring a touch of Italian autumn to your table! For more cozy Italian-inspired fall recipes, check out my [Roasted Butternut Squash lasagna](#) or [creamy roasted butternut squash soup](#).



Italian Roasted Delicata Squash Salad with Creamy Sicilian Dressing

Servings: 2–4

Cook Time: 25–30 minutes

Ingredients for Roasting the Delicata Squash:

- 1 delicata squash, scrubbed and sliced into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch half-moons (skin on)
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sea salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon garlic powder (optional)
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme or sage, chopped (optional)

Salad Ingredients:

- 4 cups arugula
- 2 tablespoons toasted pumpkin seeds (pepitas)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup shaved Parmesan

• Creamy Sicilian Dressing Ingredients:

- 3 tablespoons mayonnaise or Greek yogurt
- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup red wine vinegar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup lemon juice

- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 teaspoon oregano
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Preheat the Oven:

Preheat your oven to 425°F (220°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. Roast the Squash:

Toss the sliced delicata squash with olive oil, salt, pepper, garlic powder, and herbs. Spread in a single layer on the baking sheet. Roast for 20–25 minutes, flipping halfway through, until tender and golden at the edges.

3. Make the Dressing:

In a small bowl, whisk together mayonnaise (or Greek yogurt), olive oil, red wine vinegar, lemon juice, minced garlic, oregano, salt, and pepper until smooth and creamy.

4. Assemble the Salad:

In a large bowl, place the arugula and roasted delicata squash. Drizzle with the creamy Sicilian dressing and toss gently. Sprinkle with toasted pumpkin seeds and shaved Parmesan.

5. Serve:

Serve immediately as a warm salad or let the squash cool slightly for a room-temperature version. Perfect as a side dish or a light Italian-inspired meal.

Roasted Butternut Squash Soup

Roasted Butternut Squash Soup

There's nothing quite like a warm bowl of roasted butternut squash soup on a chilly day. This version roasts everything together – butternut squash, onions, garlic, sweet peppers, and carrots – for deep, caramelized flavor. Once roasted, everything is blended into a silky, naturally creamy soup that's comforting, wholesome, and full of fall goodness. It's a simple, rustic dish that tastes like something you'd get at a cozy café, yet it's easy to make right at home.

Things to know about this Roasted Butternut Squash Soup

- **Roasting Builds Flavor:** Roasting the squash, onion, garlic, peppers, and carrots together gives this soup a naturally sweet, caramelized depth you can't get from boiling.
- **Easy to Blend:** Once roasted, everything purees beautifully for a smooth, creamy texture – no need for added cream unless you want extra richness.
- **Customizable Broth:** Use vegetable broth for a vegetarian version or chicken broth for a heartier flavor.
- **Freezer-Friendly:** This soup freezes well for up to 3 months. Reheat gently on the stove and refresh with a splash of broth.

- **Perfect Make-Ahead Meal:** Roast the vegetables a day in advance, then blend and warm when ready to serve for a quick, cozy meal.
 - **Italian Flavor Twist:** Add a drizzle of olive oil infused with rosemary, a sprinkle of Parmesan cheese, or a touch of crushed red pepper for that warm Italian flair.

If you love this cozy soup, you might also enjoy:

- Italian wedding soup
- Italian Escarole and Beans with Sausage
- Zuppa Toscana with Italian Sausage
- Vegetarian Mushroom Soup with an Italian Twist



Roasted Butternut Squash Soup

Servings: 4–6

Cook Time: 1 hour (15 min prep, 45 min roast)

Ingredients

- 1 large butternut squash, halved and seeds removed
- 1 medium onion, roughly chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, unpeeled
- 1–2 small sweet peppers (or bell pepper), chopped
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and chopped
- 2–3 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- 4 cups vegetable or chicken broth (as preferred)
- Optional: $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon smoked paprika or pinch of chili flakes for depth
- Optional toppings: a drizzle of cream, toasted pumpkin seeds, or crispy sage

Instructions

1. **Preheat oven:** to 400°F (200°C).
2. **Prepare vegetables:** Place the cleaned, halved butternut squash on a baking sheet, cut side up. Fill each cavity with chopped onion, garlic cloves (still in skin), and peppers. Scatter the carrots around the pan.
3. **Season and roast:** Drizzle everything with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Roast for about 45–50

minutes, or until the squash is tender and caramelized.

4. **Scoop and blend:** Once cooled slightly, scoop the flesh from the squash and squeeze out the roasted garlic. Add all roasted vegetables to a blender with 3 cups of broth. Blend until smooth, adding more broth to reach your desired consistency.
 5. **Simmer:** Pour the soup into a pot and warm over medium heat for 5–10 minutes. Adjust seasoning as needed.
 6. **Serve:** Ladle into bowls and top with a drizzle of cream or olive oil and your favorite garnishes.
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5 Cozy Italian-Inspired Fall Soups

5 Cozy Italian-Inspired Fall Soups

When the air turns crisp and the leaves start to fall, nothing warms the soul like a steaming bowl of soup. Over my years in Italian kitchens and running my restaurants, I've crafted many comforting soups that bring warmth and flavor to chilly days. These five cozy Italian-inspired fall soups are my absolute favorites – perfect for family dinners, casual weeknights, or when you just need a little comfort in a bowl.

Each one is packed with flavor and nostalgia, and I've linked each recipe so you can make them right at home. Plus, these

soups aren't just for fall – they'll keep you cozy all through the cold weather season!



1. Classic Italian Wedding Soup

Comforting, hearty, and filled with mini meatballs, greens, and pasta. Italian Wedding Soup Perfect for chilly nights, this traditional Italian favorite brings nostalgia and warmth in every spoonful.



2. Creamy Italian Sausage Zuppa Toscana

Creamy and savory with sausage and greens – tastes like fall in a bowl. Zuppa Toscana with Italian Sausage This restaurant-style soup is rich, comforting, and made easily at home.



3. Potato Leek Soup with Pancetta

- A restaurant classic – simple, silky, and full of flavor. Potato Leek Soup with Pancetta One of the most popular soups from my restaurant days, it's rustic yet elegant, and perfect for cozying up on a fall evening.



4. Split Pea Soup with Ham

- A hearty and rustic soup that feels like home cooking at its best. Split Pea Soup with Ham A longtime favorite from my restaurant menu, this one delivers rich, smoky comfort with every bite.



5. Escarole and Bean Soup with Italian Sausage

- A true Italian classic that's nourishing and full of flavor. Escarole and Beans with Italian Sausage Simple, healthy, and satisfying – this soup has all the soul of Italian home cooking.

Things to know about these 5 Italian inspired Fall soups

- **Use quality ingredients.** A great soup starts with a good base – use a rich homemade or low-sodium broth, fresh herbs, and real Parmigiano-Reggiano for authentic Italian flavor.
- **Layer your flavors.** Sautéing onions, garlic, and vegetables first helps develop deep, rich flavor before adding liquids.
- **Don't rush the simmer.** Many soups taste even better the next day as the flavors meld – perfect for meal prepping or easy leftovers.
- **Add pasta last.** For soups like Italian Wedding or Zuppa

Toscana, cook the pasta separately or just until al dente in the soup to avoid overcooking.

- **Freeze-friendly favorites.** Split Pea Soup, Escarole and Bean, and even the Italian Wedding Soup freeze beautifully – perfect for cozy nights when you don't feel like cooking.
 - **Garnish matters.** A drizzle of good olive oil, fresh herbs, or a sprinkle of cheese can turn a simple bowl into something restaurant-worthy.
 - **Pair with crusty bread.** No Italian soup night is complete without a loaf of warm, crusty bread or homemade baguette for dipping.
 - Try one and tag me on Instagram @ Lorianasheacooks – I love seeing your cozy soup
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Squash Varieties + Easy Cooking Ideas

Squash Varieties + Easy Cooking Ideas

Every fall, I look forward to squash season. Growing up, it was a staple at the market, and even now I can't resist filling my basket with all the different shapes and colors. Each variety has its own personality—some sweet and creamy, others nutty and hearty—and they all find their way into comforting dishes in my kitchen. From soups and pastas to

stuffed squash dinners, these vegetables bring warmth to the table.

Why Squash is So Special

Squash is more than just pretty on the counter—it's wholesome, versatile, and naturally comforting. Packed with fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants, it's a vegetable that feels indulgent while being nourishing. And I love how it works in both savory dishes (like roasted squash with herbs or creamy risottos) and sweet recipes (cakes, muffins, even cookies).

Things to know about Squash Varieties + Easy Cooking Ideas

Common Types of Squash

- **Butternut Squash**

Sweet, creamy, and one of the most popular varieties. Perfect for soups, roasting, or blending into a pasta sauce.

- **Acorn Squash**

Mild and nutty with a tender texture. Its natural "bowl" shape makes it perfect for stuffing with sausage, rice, or grains.

- **Delicata Squash**

Quick-cooking with edible skin, slightly sweet flavor, and beautiful striped skin. Great roasted in slices or tossed into salads.

- **Spaghetti Squash**

Once baked, its flesh turns into golden strands that mimic pasta. A fun and lighter way to serve saucy dishes.

• Easy Ways to Cook Squash

- Roast with olive oil, garlic, and fresh herbs.
- Stuff with sausage, rice, or seasonal vegetables.
- Puree into soups, sauces, or risottos.
- Toss into pasta or gnocchi.
- Bake into breads, muffins, or cakes.
- **How to pick:** Look for squash that feels heavy for its size, with firm skin and no soft spots.
- **Storage:** Whole squash keeps well on the counter for 1–2 months. Once cut, store in the fridge and use within a week. Cooked squash can be frozen for up to 3 months.
- **Peeling tip:** Microwave a whole squash for 2–3 minutes before peeling—it softens the skin and makes it easier to handle.

• A Cozy Recipe to Try: Creamy Butternut Squash Pasta with Italian Sausage

Now that we've explored the different types of squash and how versatile they can be, I wanted to share one of my favorite ways to enjoy butternut squash in the fall. It turns into the creamiest pasta sauce, and when paired with Italian sausage, it becomes the kind of hearty, comforting meal everyone loves.

- If you're ready to start cooking with squash, I've got a few more cozy recipes to get you inspired. My Italian sausage & spinach butternut squash

stuffed Roasted Butternut Squash Gnocch

Creamy Butternut Squash Pasta with Italian sausage

Ingredients

- 1 medium butternut squash (about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ –3 lbs), peeled, seeded, and cubed
- 3 tbsp olive oil, divided
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
- 1 lb Italian sausage (mild or spicy), casings removed
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chicken broth (or vegetable broth)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup heavy cream
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 12 oz short pasta (rigatoni, penne, or orecchiette work well)
- Fresh sage or parsley, for garnish

Instructions

1. **Roast the Squash:** Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Toss cubed butternut squash with 2 tbsp olive oil, salt, pepper, and crushed red pepper flakes.

Spread on a baking sheet and roast for 25–30 minutes, until tender and caramelized.

2. **Cook the Pasta:** While the squash roasts, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook pasta according to package directions until al dente. Reserve 1 cup pasta water, then drain.
3. **Cook the Sausage:** In a large skillet, heat 1 tbsp olive oil over medium heat. Add Italian sausage, breaking it apart with a spoon, and cook until browned and cooked through. Remove sausage from the pan and set aside.
4. **Make the Sauce:** In the same skillet, add onion and sauté until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic and cook 1 minute more. Add roasted squash and broth. Simmer for 3–4 minutes, then blend (with an immersion blender or carefully in a regular blender) until smooth and creamy. Stir in the heavy cream and Parmesan.
5. **Combine Everything:** Return the sausage to the skillet. Add cooked pasta and toss, adding reserved pasta water as needed for a silky sauce.
6. **Serve:** Garnish with fresh sage or parsley, extra Parmesan, and a drizzle of good olive oil. Serve warm.

Storage

Leftovers keep well in the fridge for 3 days. Reheat gently with a splash of broth or cream to loosen the sauce.

Creamy Mushroom and Italian Sausage Risotto

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It's no surprise most Italian restaurants have risotto on their menu, it seems too complicated for the home cook.

Well Am here to tell you this Homemade Restaurant creamy Mushroom and Italian sausage risotto isn't complicated at all.

Risotto is a northern Italian rice dish cooked with broth until it reaches a creamy consistency.

The broth can be derived from meat, fish or vegetables, I used chicken broth, if you are vegetarian you can use vegetable stock.

This is one of those recipes you make a enough of, for next day reheats or freeze for a quick ready made meal.

Plus, risotto is easy and versatile enough to have on your family weeknight meal plan. This restaurant quality recipe is also perfect for Holiday dinner with friends, to show off what a great home chef you are.

Things to know about this Creamy

Mushroom and Italian Sausage Risotto

- **Rice Matters:** Arborio rice is best for risotto because it releases starch as it cooks, giving you that creamy texture. Don't substitute with regular long-grain rice.
- **Broth Temperature:** Keep your chicken broth warm. Adding cold broth slows down the cooking and can make the risotto less creamy.
- **Stir Often:** Risotto needs attention! Stirring helps release the starch from the rice and prevents sticking.
- **Sausage Options:** You can use sweet or spicy Italian sausage depending on your taste. Either works beautifully with the mushrooms.
- **Finishing Touch:** Stir in butter and Parmesan off the heat for an extra creamy, rich finish. A sprinkle of fresh parsley brightens the dish just before serving.
- **Make-Ahead Tip:** Risotto is best served immediately, but if you need to make it ahead, undercook it slightly, then reheat with a splash of broth to bring it back to creamy perfection.
- Craving more comforting Italian dishes? Check out my **Classic Chicken Parmesan**, **Creamy Italian Sausage mushroom Pasta**, or **Zuppa Toscana Soup** for more hearty, restaurant-style recipes you can make at home. Don't forget to **save this risotto recipe** so you can enjoy it any night of the week!

Creamy Mushroom and Italian Sausage Risotto

Servings: 4

Cook Time: 35 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 pound Italian sausage, casings removed
- 2 cups Arborio rice
- 8 ounces mushrooms, sliced (cremini, button, or mixed)
- 1 small shallot, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 cups chicken broth, kept warm
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1 cup heavy cream
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large skillet or saucepan. Add the sausage, breaking it up as it cooks, until browned.
2. In the same pan, add the remaining olive oil and 1 tablespoon butter. Sauté the onion until soft, then add garlic and mushrooms. Cook until mushrooms are golden.
3. Stir in the Arborio rice and toast for 1–2 minutes until

edges are translucent.

4. Pour in the wine, stirring until it is absorbed.
5. Begin adding warm chicken broth one ladleful at a time, stirring often. Allow each addition to be absorbed before adding more. Continue until the rice is creamy and tender, about 18–20 minutes.
6. Add the cream and simmer 5 minutes longer.
7. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately while creamy. ENJOY!!!!