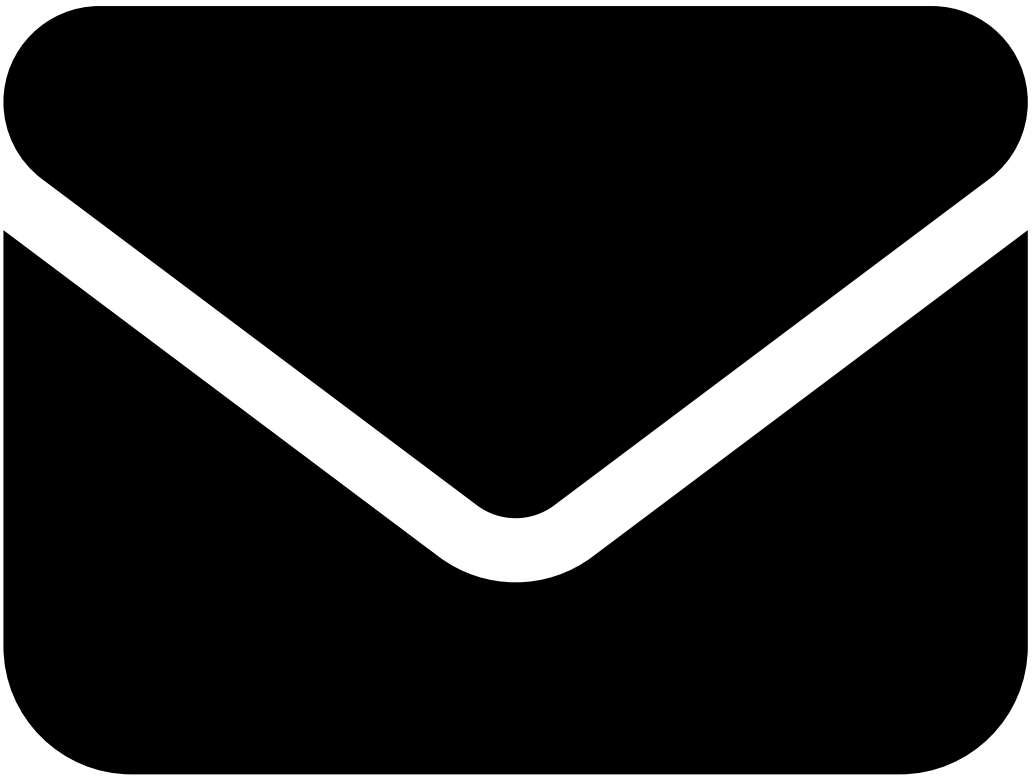
Italian Style cabbage rolls

Italian Style Cabbage Rolls

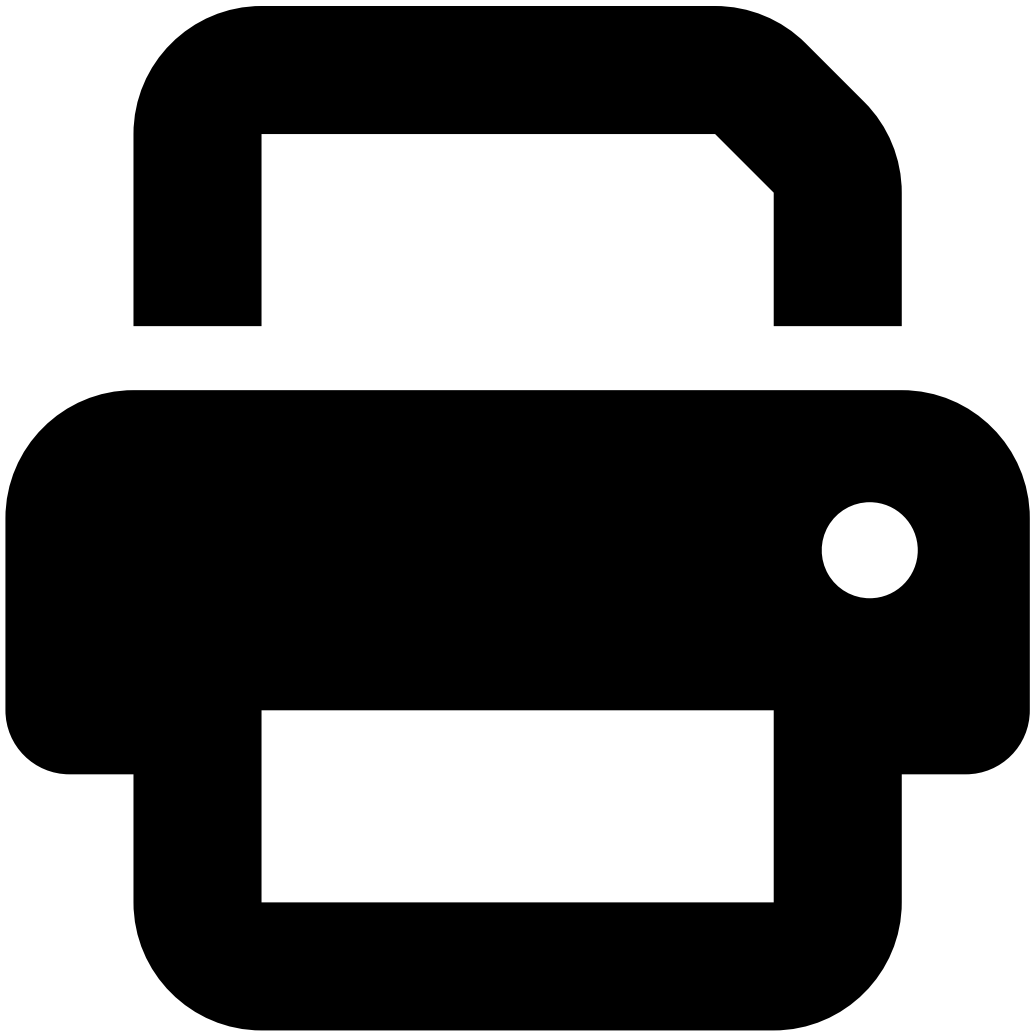
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Tender cabbage leaves are filled with a savory mixture of ground beef, rice, Parmesan cheese, and fresh herbs, then nestled into my homemade marinara sauce and topped with even more sauce before baking until tender and bubbling. The result is a hearty, comforting dish that brings two culinary traditions together in one very special recipe.

This Italian-style cabbage rolls recipe is one of those dishes that carries a little bit of history with every bite. It was inspired by my ex-mother-in-law’s traditional Polish cabbage rolls, a recipe that has stayed with me through the years. Although life took us in different directions, I never forgot her recipe—or the comfort that came with it.

When I recreated it in my own kitchen, I couldn’t resist adding a little Italian flair. I brought in flavors that are familiar to me and rooted in my Italian cooking: Parmesan cheese, fresh herbs, and my homemade marinara sauce. The

result is a beautiful blend of Polish tradition and Italian flavors—a recipe that honors where it came from while making it my own.

It’s the kind of meal that belongs in the center of the table, surrounded by family, good bread, and plenty of sauce for dipping.

How to Make Easy Italian-Style Cabbage Rolls

Cabbage rolls may look like a lot of work, but they really aren’t. The trick is to break the recipe into a few simple steps and, if you have the time, do some of the preparation ahead. I’ve made plenty of recipes over the years that look complicated when you first read them, but once you get organized in the kitchen, they become much easier.

The good news is that almost every part of these cabbage rolls can be prepared ahead of time.

Start with the Cabbage

The first step is softening the cabbage leaves so they’re pliable enough to roll. You can easily do this a day or two ahead. Once the leaves are softened, separate them, let them cool, and store them covered in the refrigerator.

A little tip: I like to prepare a few extra cabbage leaves. Some may tear while you’re separating them, and having extras makes assembling the rolls much easier.

Make the Marinara

The marinara sauce can also be made ahead. In fact, this is one of those recipes where having homemade marinara already in the freezer makes dinner so much easier.

I usually make a big batch and freeze it in different-size containers. That way, I always have sauce ready for recipes like these cabbage rolls, pasta, chicken, or anything else that needs a good tomato sauce.

If you're making the marinara specifically for this recipe, you can prepare it **a day ahead and refrigerate it**.

Prepare the Filling

The beef and rice filling can be prepared ahead as well. Mix everything together, cover, and refrigerate until you're ready to assemble the cabbage rolls.

This is where doing a little prep ahead really pays off. When the cabbage, marinara, and filling are ready, the hardest part is already done.

Assemble the Cabbage Rolls

When you're ready to assemble, lay a cabbage leaf flat, add the filling, and roll it up, tucking in the sides as you go. You don't need to make every roll exactly the same size—just try to keep the filling evenly divided.

Spread some marinara sauce in the bottom of your baking dish, arrange the cabbage rolls seam-side down, and spoon more marinara over the top.

Then into the oven they go.

Can You Make Cabbage Rolls Ahead?

Absolutely. That's one of the things I love about this recipe.

You can assemble the cabbage rolls earlier in the day, cover them, and refrigerate them until you're ready to bake. You can also freeze them **before or after baking**.

If freezing them unbaked, thaw them overnight in the

refrigerator before baking. If they’re already baked, let them cool completely before freezing, then thaw and reheat gently in the oven.

My best advice: Don’t think of this as one big recipe. Prepare the cabbage, make the sauce, prepare the filling, and then put everything together. Once you approach it that way, these Italian-style cabbage rolls are much easier than they first appear—and they’re well worth the little bit of extra effort

Italian Style Cabbage Rolls



Tender cabbage leaves filled with a savory Italian-style meat and rice mixture, baked slowly in a rich tomato sauce until tender and flavorful. These comforting Italian cabbage rolls make a hearty family dinner and are perfect for make-ahead meals.

- 1 medium head of cabbage
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 1/2 lb. ground beef
- 2 cups cooked rice
- 1 cup grated parmesan
- 1 egg

- 1/2 cup chopped Italian parsley
- salt and pepper to taste
- 4 cups my easy marinara sauce

1. Prepare the cabbage by removing as much of the core as possible. Then place the cabbage in a large pot of salted water. Bring to a boil and cook for 5 minutes or until you can easily separate the leaves with thongs. You may need to help the leaves off using a knife. Set aside to cool. The smaller leaves can be frozen for soup.

2. Make the filling in a saute pan in 2 tbsp. of olive oil cook the onion and garlic until soft and translucent. Then add the ground beef and cook until brown.
3. Using the same water from the cabbage cook the rice for 5-7 minutes or until the rice is cooked al dente. Drain the rice
4. Mix the cooked ground beef mixture with rice. Add the egg , parmesan, Italian parsley and 1 cup of the marinara sauce, salt and pepper to taste mix until well combined
5. Assemble the cabbage rolls: Place a cabbage leaf on a flat surface place 2 tbsp. of the filling in the center . Fold the flaps over the filling then roll up jelly roll style.
6. Line an oven proof casserole dish with 1 cup of my easy marinara sauce. place the filled cabbage rolls on top. Top with the remaining 2 cups of marinara.
7. Bake in a preheated 375-degree oven for 35- 45 minutes. Top with additional Italian parsley

Don’t overcook the cabbage leaves when blanching them. You want them tender enough to roll but still sturdy enough to hold the filling. Remove the thickest part of the center rib if needed—it makes rolling the cabbage much easier and gives you neat, evenly cooked rolls.

Main Course
American, Italian
Italian stuffed cabbage rolls,