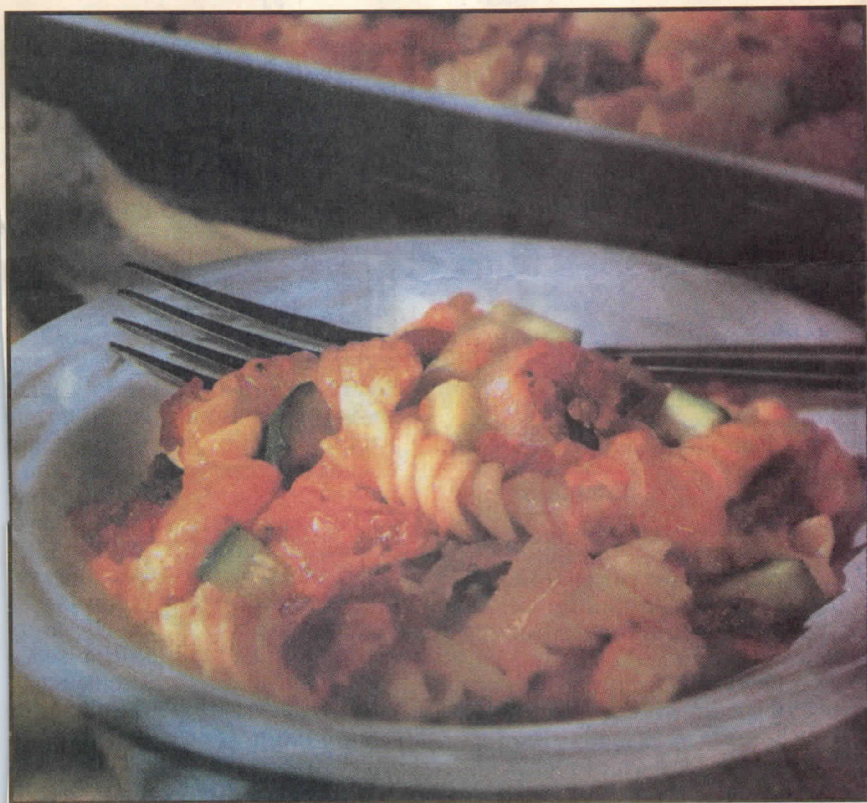


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WINNIPEG FREE PRESS,
WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2002



Veggie, beef and pasta bake is a quick and healthy summer supper.

Dinners

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Veggie, beef and pasta bake

Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
1 lb. (500 g) lean ground beef
1 cup (250 mL) sliced onions
1 cup (250 mL) diced zucchini
2 teaspoons (10 mL) minced garlic
28 oz. (796 mL) stewed or diced tomatoes, with juice
2 tablespoons (25 mL) sodium-reduced soy sauce
1/2 teaspoon (2 mL) crushed red pepper flakes
2 cups (500 mL) rotini or other spiral pasta
1-1/2 cups (375 mL) shredded Cheddar cheese

In a large non-stick skillet over medium high heat, combine ground beef, onions, zucchini and garlic; cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until beef is no longer pink and vegetables are softened. Drain fat; pour beef mixture into greased 13x9-inch (3 L) baking dish. Set aside.

Meanwhile, drain juice from tomatoes into 8 cup (2 L) microwave-safe measuring cup; add water to make 2

cups (500 mL). Coarsely chop tomatoes; add to measuring cup. Stir in soy sauce and red pepper flakes. Microwave on High for 5 minutes or until very hot. Stir in rotini.

Pour tomato-pasta mixture into baking dish and combine with meat mixture. Press pasta down to make sure it is submerged in the liquid. Bake in preheated oven, covered for 20 minutes. Remove cover; stir gently and sprinkle with cheese. Bake, uncovered, for 15 to 20 minutes or until pasta is tender.

Serves 6.

Per serving: 362 calories, 3 g dietary fibre, 17 g fat, 26 g carbohydrate, 25 g protein.

Source: Dietitians of Canada Cook Great Food
(Robert Rose, 2001.)

TASTE-TESTER NOTES:

This tasty dish contains foods from all four food groups and saves time because you don't have to pre-cook the pasta. I used flavourful stewed tomatoes (instead of diced tomatoes.) If you don't have a 2 L measuring cup, simply pour the juice from the canned tomatoes into a 2 cup (500 mL) measure and add water to fill up to 2 cups (500 mL). Then pour the juice into a 2 L microwave-safe casserole dish and proceed as directed. You can use regular soy sauce. I also seasoned the ground beef with pepper.