

TARLA DALAL INDIA'S #1 COOKERY AUTHOR



# BAKED DISHES

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## ○ INTRODUCTION ○

'Baked Dish' – This very term reminds us of continental cuisine. There is no denying that it is a very “Western” concept, but it has started making headway into Indian homes and that too at breakneck speed. The reason for the growing popularity of baked dishes could be attributed among other things to the excitement-seeking palates of today's youngsters, or to their desire to cook exotic dishes quickly and easily!

I am sure you would have encountered common baked dishes such as Vegetable Au Gratin and Baked Macaroni sometime in your life. Exciting though they are, the repertoire of baked dishes is in no way limited to these. Different cuisines have their own versions of bakes dishes. For example, the Mexicans have Enchiladas, Italians have Lasagne, and the French have the famous Au Gratin!

Here, I have recorded a lot of traditional all-time favourite recipes from various cultures, including Mexican, Italian and French, as well as innovated and presented various new recipes.

I know that the word 'bake' would immediately have conjured up the image of aromatic cakes, cookies, breads and pies, which delight the sweet tooth, but in this book I have broken away from the stereotype and focused on savoury meal-time baked dishes, which involve Everyday Bakes, Quick Bakes, Party Bakes and Quiches & Pies.

I am sure you are going to enjoy making these dishes, whether it is simple ones like Minty Baked Potatoes, page 27 and Asparagus and Corn Au gratin, page 31 or the more exotic ones like Fettuccine Spinach Bake, page 41, Spicy Mexican Pasta Bake, page 59, Baked Cannelloni with Pomodoro Sauce, page 70 and Spinach and Corn Quiche, page 80.

As you browse through the book, you are sure to notice that most of the ingredients are the same for almost all the recipes, but trust me the end-result of each recipe is distinctly different. Just like for cooking *parathas* you have flour, ghee and oil as the basic ingredients, so also with baked dishes you have cheese, cream, white sauce, tomato sauce, and so on. And the quality of these basic ingredients contributes significantly to the success of each dish. Therefore, I have listed ten basic recipes towards the end of the book. It is these that are mixed and matched in various innovative combinations with additional ingredients to give you exciting new flavours.

The diet-conscious among my readers will also be happy to note that I have not forgotten them! Many of the recipes also suggest more healthy alternatives to fat-laden ingredients, to help cut down on the recipes' calorie count.

Hope you enjoy this novel offering of mine and may you bake your way to everybody's heart, through their stomach!

Tarda Darda

## CONTENTS

A Few Tips on Baking..... 9

### EVERYDAY BAKES

Baked Pesto Pasta..... 12

Baked Kidney Beans with Alfredo  
Sauce..... 14

Spinach Gnocchi with Marinara  
Sauce..... 17

Peppery Mushroom and  
Potato Bake..... 21

Baked Vegetable Risotto..... 23

Fusion Bake..... 25

Minty Baked Potatoes..... 27

Garlic Spaghetti Bake..... 29

Asparagus and Corn Augratin..... 31

Original Lasagne..... 33

### QUICK BAKES

Baked Mushroom Macaroni..... 36

Zucchini and Brinjal Bake..... 39

Fettuccine Spinach Bake..... 41

Baked Noodles with Spinach  
and Yoghurt..... 43

Vegetable Augratin..... 45

### PARTY BAKES

Spinach Malfati..... 47

Tortilla Bake..... 50

Baked Pasta Shells..... 53

Baked Crêpes with Capsicum Sauce.....	56
Spicy Mexican Pasta Bake .....	59
Pomodoro Lasagne.....	61
Stuffed Bulgur and Brinjal Bake .....	64
Baked Stuffed Capsicum .....	68
Baked Cannelloni with Pomodoro Sauce.....	70
Baked Spaghetti with Cheese Balls in Spinach Sauce .....	72
Fresh Corn Enchiladas .....	76

## QUICHES & PIES

Spinach and Corn Quiche .....	80
Baby Corn and Yoghurt Quiche.....	82

Mediterranean Vegetable Pie .....	84
Cauliflower and Broccoli Pie .....	87
Mushroom Pie.....	88

## BASIC RECIPES

White Sauce .....	91
Dieter's White Sauce .....	92
Cooked Pasta.....	93
Cooked Brown Rice.....	95
Short Crust Pastry .....	96
Tomato Concasse.....	97
Basic Tomato Sauce .....	98
Tortillas .....	100
Healthy Tortillas.....	101
Low Fat Paneer .....	102

## © Spinach Gnocchi with Marinara Sauce ©

*Celebrate, Italian-style! Gnocchi are Italian dumplings, which are made of spinach, potato and flour. They can either be poached or steamed. These dumplings are made on special occasions or festivals in Italy. Marinara is a chunky tomato sauce cooked with oregano.*

*Put both together, and it is indeed a festive meal!*

Preparation time: 25 minutes. Cooking time: 20 minutes. Serves 4.

Baking Temperature: 150°C (300°F). Baking Time: 15 minutes.

For the gnocchi

2 cups mashed potatoes

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup blanched and chopped spinach (*palak*)

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup plain flour (*maida*)

$\frac{1}{4}$  tsp baking powder

1 tbsp oil

1 tsp salt for boiling

Salt and pepper to taste

For the Marinara sauce

1½ cups tomatoes, cut into chunks

2 tbsp butter

2 tsp finely chopped garlic

2 tsp cream

2 tsp oregano

Salt and pepper to taste

Other ingredients

¼ cup grated mozzarella cheese

Butter for greasing

For the gnocchi

1. Combine the potatoes, spinach, plain flour, baking powder, salt and pepper in a bowl to make soft dough.
2. Divide the dough into approximately 35 to 40 equal sized balls.
3. Flatten, each ball gently using a fork.
4. Boil plenty of water in a pan and add 1 tsp of salt and 1 tbsp of oil to the water.

5. When the water boils, add a few pieces of the gnocchi at a time and allow them to half cook for 3 to 4 minutes.
6. Carefully remove the gnocchi from the boiling water, using a perforated spoon. Keep aside.
7. Repeat the same procedure for the remaining gnocchi.

#### For the Marinara sauce

1. Heat the butter in a pan, add the garlic and sauté for 1 minute.
2. Add the tomato chunks and cook for 2 to 3 minutes till they are soft. If necessary add 2 tbsp of water.
3. Add the cream, oregano, salt and pepper and sauté for another 1 minute. Remove from the flame and keep aside.

#### How to proceed

1. Layer the gnocchi in a greased rectangular baking dish and pour the marinara sauce on top.
2. Sprinkle cheese on top and bake in a pre-heated oven at 150°C (300°F) for 10 minutes.  
Serve hot.





Spinach Gnocchi with Marinara Sauce

## © Baked Mushroom Macaroni ©

*Macaroni fits well into almost any baked dish. Here's a quick combo of macaroni and vegetables, which satiates your hunger pangs and delights your taste buds at the same time.*

Preparation time: 10 minutes. Cooking time: 7 minutes. Serves 4.  
Baking Temperature: 200°C (400°F). Baking Time: 15 minutes.

2 cups cooked macaroni, page 93

For the vegetable layer

½ cup chopped onions

1 cup chopped coloured capsicums (red and yellow)

1 cup chopped tomatoes

1 cup sliced mushrooms (*khumbh*)

2 tbsp oregano

2 tbsp sliced olives

2 tbsp butter

Salt and pepper to taste

To be mixed into a mushroom sauce

¼ cup readymade mushroom soup powder

1½ cups water

Other ingredients

¼ cup grated mozzarella cheese

Butter for greasing

Few sliced black olives to serve

For the vegetable layer

1. Heat the butter in a pan, add the onions and sauté till they turn translucent.
2. Add the capsicum, tomatoes and mushrooms and sauté for another 2 minutes.
3. Add the oregano, olives, salt, pepper and mix well. Keep aside.

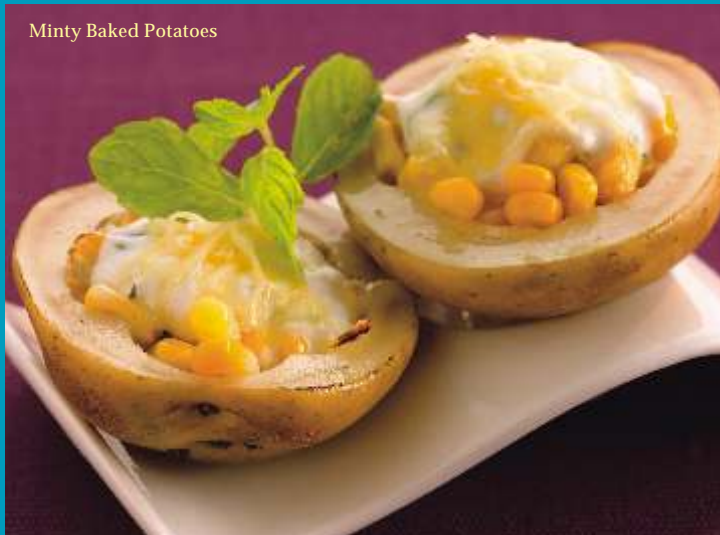
How to proceed

1. Arrange the macaroni on the bottom of a greased baking dish.
2. Spread the vegetable layer on top of the pasta and pour the mushroom sauce on top.
3. Sprinkle cheese on top and bake in a pre-heated oven at 200°C (400°F) for 10 minutes.
4. Top with olives and serve hot.

# Baked Mushroom Macaroni



Minty Baked Potatoes



**B**aked Dish – This very term reminds us of Continental cuisine. There is no denying that it is a very “Western” concept, but it has started making headway into Indian homes and that too at breakneck speed. The world of baked dishes is very exciting. Different cuisines have their own versions of bakes dishes. For example, the Mexicans have enchiladas, Italians have lasagne, and the French have the famous au gratin!

Here, I have recorded a lot of traditional all-time favourite recipes from various cultures, as well as innovated and presented various new recipes. I have broken away from the stereotype and focused not on sweet baked dishes like cakes and cookies, but on savoury meal-time baked dishes, which involve Everyday Bakes, Quick Bakes, Party Fare, and Quiches and Pies.

May you bake your way to everybody’s heart, through their stomach!

Warm regards,

*Tarla Dalal*



“**Padma Shri**” awardee, **Mrs Tarla Dalal** is India's best selling author in any field, with over 4 million cookbooks sold to date. She is the first to launch a bi-monthly food magazine, ‘**Cooking & More**’, which is the best selling cookery magazine in India, under her own name.

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