

ERUUF Special First Sunday of the Month Chicken Noodle Casserole

If this is your first casserole, please read the delivery logistics (on the back of this page) as well.

Ingredients- fills one 11 ½ by 19 ½ by 3 ½ inch pan to make 30-36 servings; get your large pan (or 3 small pans) from ERUUF. These are disposable foil pans stored in the Fellowship Hall closet between the kitchen and the stage.

2 tablespoons of dried thyme

48 oz canned chicken breast, drained (4 of the 12 oz. cans, or 10 of the 5.5 oz cans)

5 cups frozen green peas

80 oz condensed cream of mushroom soup (note: Must be condensed soup; **not semi-condensed or ready to eat**, and please don't use reduced fat soup. If you buy the family size cans to save money, each one is 26 oz., which will give you 78 oz. of soup instead of 80.)

6 cups low fat or skim milk

3 large onions, chopped

48 oz **extra-wide** egg noodles (48 oz. is **three** 16 oz. bags)

Method:

Soup/ milk: In a large pot, thoroughly combine milk and mushroom soup and whisk until smooth. Cover and heat slowly almost to a boil; cook long enough to thicken slightly. Watch and whisk often as it can scorch easily.

Onions: Dice the onions and saute until translucent and almost soft.

Noodles: In your largest pot, bring salted water to a rolling boil. Add the egg noodles and **UNDERCOOK!**, for approximately 4 ½ minutes. **You need to stop cooking them while they are really still too chewy; very al dente. Drain them well. If they start out thoroughly cooked, or don't get drained well, with all the added liquid in the casserole and the second round of cooking at the shelter they will turn mushy.** [Note: You may need to do this in several batches; this quantity of noodles requires a lot of water to heat.]

Coat the casserole pan with cooking spray. [Note: Smaller pans are also provided at ERUUF: you need three of them to equal one of the large ones. Some cooks find the smaller pans easier to handle.] Transfer the drained noodles to the casserole pan(s). If you do this in batches, you can keep the first batches from sticking together by mixing in a little oil in after draining.

Chicken/ peas: In a very large bowl, combine cooked onions, thyme, peas and chicken and mix. Then add the milk/soup mixture and blend. [Note: if this is too large a quantity of food to handle comfortably in one bowl, first add the chicken mixture to the noodles in the pan, then add the liquid to that mixture.] **Mix it all together until the mixture thoroughly coats the pasta, being careful not to puncture the casserole pan.** Allow the casserole to cool, then **cover and seal it with heavy duty aluminum foil.**

When dropping off your casserole at ERUUF, **add another layer of aluminum foil before refrigerating or freezing it.** There is a roll of foil in the ERUUF kitchen. When moving and transporting your casserole(s), it's best to place the pan on a large baking sheet or some other support. The large pan, when filled, weighs around 15 pounds.

[Note: one of our long-time cooks preps the soup mixture, chicken mixture and noodles separately at home and brings them all to the fellowship hall kitchen, then mixes them in the casserole pan when she gets there. This eliminates having to transport the heavy filled pan.]

At the Shelter, the servers will add toppings and bake your casserole.

CASSEROLE DELIVERY LOGISTICS

Note: The casserole recipe is on the other side of this page.

If you have questions:

Delivery issues: Bo Glenn boglenn@nc.rr.com or Marlys Ray wcbmkr@gmail.com.

Casserole signup and scheduling: Judith Lyon-Mitchell JudithAnnLM@gmail.com

General:

Casseroles are always due on the first Sunday of each month, and are served for dinner at Urban Ministries that day. It is fine to make it several weeks in advance and store at ERUUF according to the guidelines below. Bo Glenn or Steve Criscenzo will pick up everything that has been delivered to ERUUF on Sunday afternoon to transport to the shelter. If you prefer to deliver directly to the shelter, take your casserole there at 4:30pm on the Sunday when it is due. ***It would be very helpful if you will let Judith know when you have delivered your casserole to ERUUF, or if you plan to bring it to the shelter instead.***

Pans for the casseroles are disposable foil pans supplied by ERUUF, stored in the Fellowship Hall on a baker's rack in the closet between the kitchen and the stage. There are large and small pans; you need 1 large or 3 small pans for 1 complete casserole recipe. These pans are very specific sizes which will exactly hold all the ingredients. The large pan measures 19 ½ by 11 ½ by 3 ½ inches (interior measurements). If the pans are gone, email Bo or Marlys or Judith. You may be able to buy a pan of the right size at some of the area supermarkets; ERUUF gets them at Costco in bulk. If you need a pan in a pinch, email Marlys; I might have one around.

Keep in mind when planning cooking and delivery that the ERUUF buildings are closed on Friday and Saturday, so you can't deliver a casserole on those days unless you have a key to the Fellowship Hall. **If you ever get in a bind with this access issue, email Marlys and we'll figure it out. (Marlys notes: However I live 20 minutes from ERUUF so if I'm able to come and let you in it will be a wait. I can store your casserole at my house and deliver it for you if necessary, if we are able to arrange to meet.**

Whenever you deliver a casserole or casseroles, please cover them with a double layer of the heavy duty foil supplied in the ERUUF kitchen. Put your name on the casserole, label it for the shelter, and leave it in the fridge.

To freeze or not to freeze: Because the casseroles are so large, there are some rules for deciding whether to freeze them or not, depending on how close to the due date you prepare and deliver.

A frozen casserole takes several days to thaw, so *please* follow the guidelines below:

Do not freeze a casserole any later than 4 days before the due date / serving date.

Freezing: If you deliver your casserole anytime up through the last Wednesday (i.e. 4 days) before the Sunday when it is used, leave it in the freezer. Using the freezer at ERUUF- Be aware that once you open and close it, it seals the door until it cools back to the set temperature. Plan on opening and closing it just once or be prepared to wait to be able to re-open it if you need to.

Don't freeze:

- If you deliver your casserole on the last Thursday before the Sunday when it will be used (i.e. 3 days in advance), it needs to be either fresh, or in the process of thawing (if you froze it at home earlier). Leave it in the fridge.
- If you make your casserole on Friday or Saturday of the weekend when it will be used, ***do not freeze it***. It will not have time to thaw if you deliver it frozen on Sunday.
- If you deliver your casserole on the Sunday when it is due, it needs to be fresh or completely thawed if you froze it earlier. Deliver to ERUUF by the end of the second service, or to the shelter at 4:30pm.