

'Left over' doesn't have to mean 'left with the trash'

By Karen Danielson / May 6, 2006

Spaghetti Zuppa (Soup)

1 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
½ tsp. dried basil
2 cloves garlic, crushed then minced very fine
Crushed red pepper flakes, to your taste, if desired
1-14.5 oz. can of Italian flavored diced tomatoes, undrained
6 tsp. beef soup base or 6 beef bouillon cubes
6 C. water
2 C. leftover spaghetti sauce, either meat sauce or with meat balls
2 C. leftover cooked spaghetti, cut into 1 or 2 inch sections (a lot easier to eat this way)
Croutons, garlic flavored, and larger size
Parmesan cheese

Heat the olive oil in a five-quart Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add the chopped onions and allow them to sauté until they start to soften and become slightly translucent. While onions are cooking take the half teaspoon of dried basil and place it into the palm of your hand. Rub it into a fine powder with the heel of your other hand and then put it in with the onions, to cook. This method of rubbing and heating the basil brings out the dried basil's wonderful flavor and aroma.

At this point reduce the heat and add the prepared garlic. Mix garlic into the onions and basil, add the crushed red pepper flakes (if using). Cook and stir until the garlic releases its fragrance. Don't allow the garlic to become over-browned or it will become bitter tasting and will taint the flavor of your entire soup. Add the next four ingredients. Mix all the added ingredients well and allow to simmer, uncovered, for 30 minutes.

Add the prepared, leftover spaghetti and return the soup to serving temperature. Serve the soup in large soup bowls, pass the croutons (instead of crackers) and then pass the Parmesan cheese, to be sprinkled on top of croutons. Serve with garlic bread, for "sopping." Sopping is the word origin for the word soup. Also serve a nice tossed salad on the side and be prepared to enjoy a wonderful re-cycled leftover!

I want to share the background of this recipe. This recipe was created by my daughter-in-law Daisy Danielson. Daisy and her husband Scott (our first-born son) and their two sons, Brian and Ian Danielson, were living on Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas when Daisy came up with this recipe! Denny, my husband, and I were visiting when Daisy turned the prior evening's spaghetti with meat sauce into a wonderful soup for lunch the next day. Now I have a new idea for recycling spaghetti, instead of inhaling it cold, about midnight, right out of the container in the refrigerator.

I do a pretty good job on my own for recycling leftovers, but this one is as good as any recipe that I've created. It takes very few added ingredients and it's always been a hit with my family. I used to say that my boys would eat anything as long as there was tomato sauce on it or in it. Our sons were really good eaters, and loving to cook, that suited me just fine.

My neighbor next door, Barb Blackson, was busy raising four girls and a boy while I was raising my four boys. The children were all pretty much in the same age range (teenagers) and I used to tell Barb that the extra money I spent on food for my boys, she spent on clothes for her girls. Teenage boys are always hungry and mine used to stand in front of the opened refrigerator door until their nasal hairs froze and declare they couldn't find anything to eat. That was after I had just come home from the grocery store with about \$150 worth of food. That was in the early '80s so you know \$150 bought more food at that time than it does now.

Be sure to pick up Allied News next weekend and I will give you the recipe for halupkies (if I've piqued your interest, you'll have to wait for next weekend). There's a story, of course, to go along with the recipe and the story will be about my two grandsons, Brian and Ian Danielson. It's a pretty cute story and the story will show you how God keeps you humble when you get just a little too full of yourself!

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