

Foodnity Recipes

Orzo Bake With Lemon Butter Sauce

15 min Prep time	**25 min** Cook time	**40 min** Total time
6 Servings	**Easy** Difficulty	**Italian** Cuisine

Ingredients

Pasta and Base

- [ ] 1 lb orzo pasta
- [ ] 3 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- [ ] 1 medium onion, finely diced
- [ ] 3 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 2 tablespoons olive oil

Creamy Sauce

- [ ] 1 cup heavy cream
- [ ] 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- [ ] 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- [ ] 2 tablespoons fresh lemon zest
- [ ] 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- [ ] Salt, to taste
- [ ] Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Mix-ins and Topping

- [ ] 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- [ ] 1/2 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- [ ] 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley, for garnish

Instructions

1. Start by preheating your oven to 375°F (190°C). While that's warming up, go ahead and lightly grease your 9x13-inch baking dish so nothing sticks later.

2. Bring a large pot of salted water to a rolling boil. Toss in the 1 lb orzo pasta and cook for about 9 minutes. You want it al dente—so, just a little bit of a bite left. Drain it well and set it aside for a moment.

3. While the pasta is doing its thing, heat the 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Sauté the finely diced onion until it's nice and translucent, which usually takes about 4–5 minutes. Then, stir in the minced garlic and 2 tablespoons fresh lemon zest, cooking for just another minute until it smells wonderful.

4. Now, pour in the 3 cups low-sodium chicken broth and 1 cup heavy cream. Stir in the 2 tablespoons unsalted butter until it's completely melted. Season it with salt and freshly ground black pepper, then let the mixture come to a gentle simmer.

5. Stir the drained orzo, 1 cup frozen peas (thawed), and 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese into the skillet. Keep stirring until that cheese melts in and the sauce thickens up just a bit.

6. Carefully transfer everything into your prepared baking dish. Evenly sprinkle the 1/2 cup shredded mozzarella over the top, and then—here's a little extra—finish it with a few more tablespoons of Parmesan.

7. Pop it in the oven for 20–22 minutes. You're looking for that top to be a lovely golden brown and the inside to be bubbling away.

8. Remove the bake from the oven and honestly, just let it rest for 5 minutes. It helps the sauce set. Finally, sprinkle the 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley over the top for a fresh pop of color.

9. Serve it while it's hot, spooning generous portions onto your plates. I mean, it's just so comforting. Pair it with a crisp green salad or some steamed asparagus to round out the meal.

Nutrition per serving

480 kcal	18 g	38 g	24 g
Calories	Protein	Carbs	Fat

Tips & notes

- The lemon zest adds a brightness that cuts right through the rich cream.
- Letting the dish rest for 5 minutes after baking makes a huge difference in the sauce consistency.
- Using low-sodium broth helps you control the saltiness, especially with the Parmesan.