

Foodnity Recipes

Spinach Stuffed Shells With Chili Crisp

20 min Prep time	**30 min** Cook time	**50 min** Total time
6 Servings	**Easy** Difficulty	**Italian** Cuisine

Ingredients

Pasta & Filling

- [ ] 12 jumbo pasta shells
- [ ] Salt, for boiling water
- [ ] 4 cups fresh spinach, washed, stems removed
- [ ] 1 ½ cups ricotta cheese
- [ ] 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- [ ] ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- [ ] 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- [ ] 1 tsp garlic powder
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper

Baking & Topping

- [ ] 2 cups marinara sauce
- [ ] 2 tbsp olive oil
- [ ] 1 cup shredded mozzarella, for topping
- [ ] ¼ cup grated Parmesan, for topping

Chili Crisp Drizzle

- [ ] 2 tbsp chili flakes or dried chilies
- [ ] 1 tbsp ground Sichuan peppercorns
- [ ] 1 tbsp sesame oil
- [ ] 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- [ ] 1 tsp roasted garlic powder
- [ ] 1 tsp roasted ginger powder
- [ ] 1 tsp brown sugar
- [ ] 2 tbsp soy sauce
- [ ] 1 tbsp rice vinegar
- [ ] 1 tbsp toasted sesame seeds

Instructions

1. First things first, go ahead and preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C). It just gives everything a chance to get nice and hot while we prep.

2. Get a large pot of salted water boiling. Drop in those 12 jumbo pasta shells and cook them according to the package—usually about 8–10 minutes until they're al dente. Now, here is the trick: drain them and rinse under cold water immediately to stop the cooking. We don't want them getting too soft, yeah?

3. In a large bowl, let's mix the 4 cups fresh spinach, 1 ½ cups ricotta cheese, 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese, ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese, the beaten egg, 1 tsp garlic powder, and ½ tsp black pepper. Stir it all together until it's creamy and well blended. It smells wonderful already.

4. Gently fold your cooked shells into that lovely spinach mixture. Just scramble them a bit so each shell is coated—no need to be rough with them. Once they're ready, transfer them into a lightly greased 9x13-inch baking dish.

5. Spread 1½ cups marinara sauce over the top of the shells. Then, sprinkle on 1 cup shredded mozzarella and ¼ cup Parmesan. To finish it off, drizzle the remaining ½ cup marinara over the top for a bit of a marbled look.

6. Pop them in the oven for 25 minutes. You're looking for that cheese to be golden and bubbly. Once they're out, honestly, just let them rest for 5 minutes so the sauce sets.

7. While those are baking, we'll make the chili crisp. In a small saucepan over low heat, warm the 1 tbsp vegetable oil, 1 tbsp sesame oil, and 2 tbsp chili flakes for about 2 minutes until it's fragrant. Take it off the heat and stir in the 2 tbsp soy sauce, 1 tbsp rice vinegar, 1 tsp roasted garlic powder, 1 tsp roasted ginger powder, 1 tsp brown sugar, 1 tbsp ground Sichuan peppercorns, and 1 tbsp toasted sesame seeds. Let it cool; it'll thicken up a bit.

8. Serve those shells hot and drizzle that spicy chili crisp generously over the top. If you're feeling fancy, a bit of fresh basil or more sesame seeds adds a lovely touch of color.

Nutrition per serving

420 kcal	21 g	34 g	22 g
Calories	Protein	Carbs	Fat

Tips & notes

- Rinsing the shells in cold water is essential to keep them from overcooking and sticking.
- The chili crisp can be made in advance and kept in the fridge for other meals.
- Allowing the pasta to rest after baking ensures the filling stays inside the shell.