

## THE FAMILY REUNION RECIPE By Diego Caporuscio

This family tradition of making lasagna with the outstanding sauce originated in little town south of Rome called Pignataro Interamna. This recipe was handed down from generation to generation. My great grandmother was always making this type of food. When my grandmother was 12 she learned this wonderful recipe from her mother. She took down notes and she practiced with her sisters. It's a special dish because it represents the country. They like to share it with the world and to reunite family.

The recipe begins with the sauce, which is the **HEART** and **SOUL** of the lasagna. Only the best red tomatoes are picked by my grandmother from her tomato garden. She passes the tomato through a machine that separates the skin. The good stuff is then poured in glass jars and placed in a pot so large that it could fit me. They are boiled gently for a few hours. The heart is now complete.

Next is the body. The best lasagna is always made with home-made pasta. She uses a machine to cut the dough it into large pieces. My grandmother doesn't just use ground meat, she rolls hundreds of miniature meatballs that gives the amazing texture of a meaty lasagna. She mixes this with boiled eggs, mozzarella and parmesan and puts it aside for the assembly.

The last step is the assembly. With love and attention she places the body and heart between layers of pasta and repeats this at least 5 times for the amateurs, but for the pros 8 times. Finally, she heats it up in the oven set at 300F for 45 minutes. Our favorite dish is ready for the next family reunion!