

## Stuffed Shells

Adapted from [a recipe by Lidia Bastianich](#)

### Ingredients

2 24-oz. jars of your favorite marinara sauce (my favorite budget one is Emeril's)

1 12-oz. box jumbo pasta shells

2 8-oz. packages shredded mozzarella, divided

2 c. grated Parmesan, divided

2 c. ricotta

1 15-oz. can peas

1 10-oz. box frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed of its water

1 egg

### Directions

I use a 13" x 9" pan and a 9" x 9" pan for this.

Put a large pot of water up to boil. If you want perfect stuffed shells, boil 30 or more shells, but if you don't mind that some of them will rip, you only need to boil about 24. (You'll probably only use about 24 shells, but if you only want perfect shells, you need to boil some extras. For the record, I can't really tell the difference between a perfect shell and a ripped shell once they're stuffed and smothered in sauce and baked.) Cook the shells until they're tender and drain carefully--if you just dump them into a colander, they'll probably rip. Rinse the shells in the colander under cool water and stuff them soon after they're drained to prevent them from sticking together.

While you're waiting for the shells to boil, stir together *half* of the mozzarella, *half* of the Parmesan, and all of the ricotta, peas and spinach and the egg in a large bowl.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

Spread a 1/2" layer of tomato sauce in the bottoms of the pans. Using your hands or a tablespoon, stuff the shells and lay them in rows. They can be touching, but I typically do 4 across. When you've used up all the ricotta mixture, cover the shells in tomato sauce. I usually go through the first jar and have to dip into the second jar for this. You can dribble the sauce on top of the shells and then use a spoon to scoop sauce from the pan and sort of paint the shells with sauce so that they don't dry out.

Combine the remaining mozzarella and Parmesan, and sprinkle the mixture on top of the shells. Tent the pans with foil and bake for 25-30 minutes, until bubbly all over, and then remove the foil and bake for another 5 minutes, until the cheese is totally melted and just about to turn golden brown. (Once you remove the foil, the cheese cooks quickly on top, so keep an eye on it.) Serve, or let cool and freeze.