



## Greek Orzo and Beef Casserole

### Description

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This Greek Orzo and Beef Casserole has a unique flavor and makes a nice light dinner. My friend Christine shared the recipe with me which originated from Weight Watchers. I'm not a huge casserole person so when I first saw the recipe I was a little reluctant to make it. Christine typically doesn't share a recipe with me though unless she really likes it. I gave it a try and was pleasantly surprised. It tastes great as a leftover as well.

I think we both agree that the key ingredient to this recipe is the cinnamon. It sounds strange, but blends well with the other ingredients and gives it a unique flavor. Be sure to include the cinnamon. Another nice thing about this recipe is you can make it ahead of time and refrigerate it until you are ready to bake it.

### Greek Orzo and Beef Casserole

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#### Ingredients

- 1 1/4 cups of Orzo (whole wheat) I used regular
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 red onion chopped
- 2 celery stalks chopped
- 2 garlic cloves minced
- 1/2 tsp dried oregano
- 1 14 1/2 oz. can crushed tomatoes
- 2 tbsp no-salt added tomato paste (not sure if mine was no-salt)
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup crumbled reduced fat feta cheese
- 1 tbsp grated Romano Cheese ( I used Parmesan and more than a tbsp)

#### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350. Spray 9 x 13 baking dish.
2. Cook orzo according to bag. Rinse. Transfer to large bowl.
3. Meanwhile, cook beef in skillet over medium-high heat (spray skillet). About 4 minutes.
4. Transfer to large bowl with orzo.
5. Then I used the same skillet (wipe out the fat), add onion, celery and oregano. Cook until onion is softened about 5 minutes.
6. Add crushed tomatoes, tomato paste, and cinnamon (key ingredient).
7. Reduce heat and simmer until mixture thickens, about 8 minutes.
8. Stir in feta then beef mixture.
9. Transfer to dish, sprinkle with Romano Cheese. Bake until heated through about 25 minutes.
10. Serves 6 (1 1/4 cup=serving) 7 points Weight Watchers, 291 calories

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#### Author

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