

## Sew A Picnic

A picnic. The thought of packing up our family's favorite foods and then enjoying a meal together at a park or a favorite outside spot is where memories are made. My mom was a great picnic maker. We took very few outings when I was growing up; it was difficult for a dairy farming family to get away. When we did have an outing, my mom always packed a picnic lunch. I thought it would be much more fun to eat at a restaurant, but that wasn't in the budget.

I mentioned picnics and memories. My very vivid picnic memory is of my mom slicing homemade bread, garden picked tomatoes, and peppers that she pulled out of a wicker basket. A man walking past our picnic spot, stopped briefly and said, "You're a lucky family." My mom beamed at the man; I changed my mind about picnics.

When my friends at The McCall Pattern Company suggested that I design a **Picnic Tote Collection, #6338**, it didn't take me long to put together the needed pieces—there are five in all.



Gone is the wicker basket—it takes up too much room during the picnic off-season—a fabric tote is the main element.



Large Picnic Tote

It's a roomy tote (tall enough for a bag of chips) with a width that can accommodate a host of picnic goodies. Notice the drawcord top. It took me three prototypes to get the right height for that pattern piece. (You never get to see my failures, but they're in storage—generally the things I end up using.)

Then there's the lunch-sized tote. It's a great size for a personal noontime picnic. You can slide an ice pack in one of the inside pockets to keep the contents cool. Both the picnic and noontime totes are made with streamlined techniques—I think you'll enjoy the process as much as the finished products.



When that invitation comes for the annual family reunion or neighborhood picnic, the hot dish or casserole carrier is almost as easy to make as my 10-Minute Spinach Lasagna recipe, below. Again, there's room for a hot or cold pack. Plus, notice the **Quilted Iron Quick Fabric** interior.



The other two picnic components are a hot pad and wine carrier. Not only are these items great to have for your personal use, they also make terrific gifts.





Please share your favorite picnic recollections. The random winner will receive a copy of [McCall's 6338—The Picnic Collection](#).

Here's my 10-Minute Spinach Lasagna recipe. I've carried this yummy treat to many potluck gatherings in a casserole carrier. It takes 10 minutes to compile and 60-70 minutes to bake. Enjoy!

Ingredients:

- 10 Whole wheat lasagna noodles (uncooked)
- 1 Large jar (45 oz.) Ragu or other spaghetti sauce
- 1 pkg. of frozen spinach (10 oz.) thawed
- 1 large container (16 oz.) cottage cheese.
- 16 ounces mozzarella cheese
- Parmesan cheese
- Oregano
- Salt and pepper

Directions:

- Layer five of the uncooked noodles in bottom of a 9" x 13" baking pan. It may be necessary to break one noodle in pieces to fit the pan.
- Pour half the spaghetti sauce over noodles.
- Mix the well-drained spinach and the cottage cheese. Spread half the mixture over the sauce. Sprinkle with oregano, salt, and pepper.
- Spread half the mozzarella cheese on top of the cottage cheese mixture.
- Repeat layers: noodles, spaghetti sauce, cottage cheese, and mozzarella cheese.
- Final layer: Sprinkle with parmesan cheese.
- Bake at 350 degrees for 60-70 minutes.

Bye for now,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Zieman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a white background.

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