**Creamy Parmesan Custard Topped Ratatouille**

1 ½ cup of milk

8 ounces of **Challenge Cream Cheese,** softened

3 eggs, lightly beaten

½ cup of parmesan cheese

¼ teaspoon of nutmeg

½ cup (1 stick) of **Challenge Butter**, divided

1 large eggplant peeled, and diced into 1 inch cubes

2 medium zucchini, diced into 1 inch cubes

1 large onion, diced into 1 inch cubes

1 large red pepper, diced into 1 inch cubes

8 ounces of sliced mushrooms

3 cloves of crushed garlic

1 14.5 ounce can canned tomatoes

3 teaspoons of Italian seasoning, divided

½ cup of panko bread crumbs

1/8 cup of fresh diced parsley

**Directions**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. To create the creamy custard sauce, whisk together cream cheese and milk in a medium size bowl. Whisk in eggs, parmesan cheese and nutmeg. Set aside until needed.
3. Tip: To soften my cream cheese, I like to place it on a plate and microwave for 30 seconds for easy whisking.
4. In a large skillet, add 1 teaspoon of the butter blend, along with the eggplant and zucchini. Cook over medium high heat until veggies are softened and start to brown, about 5 minutes. If vegetables begin to stick, add more butter or water to pan. Remove veggies from skillet and place into a 9x13 glass baking dish that has been spray lightly with a nonstick cooking spray.
5. In the same skillet, add another teaspoon of butter. Add onions and peppers to the pan, sauté until vegetables start to soften, about 2-3 minutes. Add mushrooms and continue cooking for an additional 3-4 minutes or until veggies begin to brown. Add to baking dish. Place canned tomatoes, garlic and herbs in skillet. Cook until most of the moisture is gone from the tomatoes, about 4-5 minutes. Add to baking dish, mixing lightly to combine.
6. In a small skillet over medium heat, add the remaining butter. When melted, stir in panko crumbs and cook until lightly browned. Set aside until needed.
7. Carefully pour the creamy custard mixture over the vegetables in the baking dish. Bake casserole for 40 minutes, or until custard top is set and golden brown. Remove from oven and sprinkle with toasted bread crumbs. Place back into the oven and bake until bread crumbs are golden brown, about 10 minutes. Sprinkle with fresh parsley, and let cool slightly before serving.

**Creates 16 side dish portions**