

Eggplant and Zucchini Gratin

From: Julia and Jacques Cooking At Home

Submitted by Joan Roy

Yield: 6-8servings

Ingredients

- ½ cup or so olive oil
- 1 large or 2 medium eggplants
- 1 tablespoon herbes de Provence
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 medium zucchini, about 1 pound total
- 3 or 4 ripe tomatoes, about 1 pound total
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

For breadcrumb topping

- ½ cup or so fresh breadcrumbs, not too finely ground
- 1/3 cup or so freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Special equipment

A large shallow-rimmed jelly-roll pan or cookie sheet: a gratin or shallow baking dish, 8 cup volume

Preparing The Vegetables

- Arrange the rack on the lower-middle level of the oven and preheat to 400. Smear a baking sheet generously with 1/3 cup of olive oil.
- Trim off ends of eggplant and slice on the diagonal into ovals 1/2 " thick.
- One at a time, lay the slices on the sheet, press to coat lightly with oil and turn them over. Arrange the slices, oiled side up ,in a single layer and sprinkle on ½ teaspoon each of salt and herbes de Provence.
- Bake for about 15 minutes until the eggplant slices are soft and somewhat shriveled; allow to cool briefly. Leave the oven on if you will be baking the gratin right away.
- Meanwhile, trim the ends off the zucchini and cut lengthwise into slices no more than 1/4" thick.
- Core the tomatoes and cut into slices 1/4" thick. Spread out the slices and sprinkle them lightly with ¼ teaspoon of freshly ground pepper.

Assembling the gratin

- Fill the gratin or baking dish well with 1 teaspoon olive oil and sprinkle a teaspoon of the dried herbs all over the bottom.
- Lay one or two eggplant slices, length wise, against a narrow side of the dish.
- Arrange a long slice or two of zucchini in front of the eggplant. \
- Place 2 or 3 tomato slices in front of the zucchini.
- Repeat until the pan is full of alternating rows of eggplant, zucchini, and tomatoes.
- Arrange each new row of slices so the colorful top edges of the previous row are still visible.

Topping and baking

- Mix the breadcrumbs, Parmesan, and teaspoon of herbes de Provence.
- Add a tablespoon of olive oil, then toss and rub it in with your fingers to coat the crumbs but keep them loose.
- Sprinkle the crumbs evenly over the vegetables and drizzle remaining oil over all.
- Place dish in center of oven and bake for 40 minutes until vegetables are soft, the juices are bubbling, and the top is a deep golden brown. If the crumbs need more browning you can stick them under the broiler for a few moments.

Serve hot directly from the baking dish.

Do Ahead Notes

- After the vegetables are assembled and topped with breadcrumbs, the gratin can be covered lightly and stored in the refrigerator for several hours. Preheat the oven and drizzle on the last olive oil just before baking.