



A Question of Taste

By Hilary Keating Callaghan

Vegetarians get equal time at a cookout

A vegetarian might, at first glance, seem to be very much out of place at a cookout. The tantalizing smell of roasting meat fills the air. A great deal of concern and attention is directed toward cooking the meat to an exact degree of doneness.

If vegetables appear on the menu at all, they are in a predictable and definitely minor role, showing up as potato salad, baked beans, or carrot sticks.

It is time vegetarians strike back and demand equal time at the barbe-

cue. On as well as off the grill, vegetables offer a tremendous spectrum of colors, flavors, textures and varieties and barbecuing seems to bring out the best of all this spectrum.

Onions turn out crunchy and sweet. Eggplant is creamy and mild. Zucchini retains its crisp character while green pepper becomes soft and mellow. Mushrooms remain firm and fresh-tasting while tomatoes soften and almost burst with flavor.

ADD TO THIS wealth of vegetables a platter of deviled eggs, a crusty loaf of bread, warmed on the side of the grill, some fresh fruit and cheese for dessert, and a vegetarian feast is the result.

This delightful spread can even share the grill with meat, providing a peerless accompaniment to steaks, sausages, hamburgers, or whatever meat is being featured. Just be sure to allow 25 to 40 percent more coals than you would use for the meat alone.

The vegetables can be cooked while the fire gets going and should be coming off the fire just about the time the coals are ready for the meat.

The method for cooking the Charcoal-Broiled Vegetables is Marcella Hazan's. I have adapted it from her book, "The Classic Italian Cook Book," which I would highly recommend to anyone interested in the cuisine of Italy.

The techniques, ingredients and re-

cipes in the book combine to preserve the freshness and individual character of the finest ingredients rather than masking them. Delightfully written, "The Classic Italian Cook Book" is both highly authentic and eminently usable, characteristics which often seem to be mutually exclusive in books on foreign cuisine.

CHARCOAL-BROILED VEGETABLES

- 1 large flat Spanish onion
- 2 sweet green or red peppers
- 2 large, firm, ripe tomatoes, halved
- 1 medium eggplant, halved lengthwise
- 2 medium fresh, young, firm glossy zucchini
- ¼ lb. very fresh and crisp mushrooms
- Salt
- Olive oil
- Crushed peppercorns
- 1 tsp. chopped parsley (optional)
- ¼ tsp. chopped garlic (optional)
- ½ tsp. fine, dry, unflavored bread crumbs (optional)

Divide the onion in half horizontally. Do not cut off the point or the root. Without piercing the skin of the eggplant, make shallow cross-hatched cuts, spaced about 1 inch apart, in the flesh. Sprinkle liberally with salt and let stand at least 15 minutes. Rinse and pat dry. Cut the zucchini into lengthwise slices about ¼ inch thick. Wipe the mushrooms clean with a damp cloth. Unless they are very small, detach the caps from the stems.

Light the fire. When the highest flames have died down, place the onion, cut side down, and the peppers on the grill. Turn the peppers as the skin chars (about 4 or 5 minutes per side) until all the skin is charred. Remove the peppers from the grill and peel them while they are still hot. Cut them into 2-inch strips, place in a bowl and toss with 3 tablespoons of olive oil plus large pinches of salt and cracked peppercorns. When the cut side of the onion is charred, turn it over with a

spatula, taking care not to separate the rings. Season each half with 1 tablespoon of olive oil and ¼ teaspoon of salt. Move to the edge of the grill, making sure there is some burning charcoal underneath.

After about 20 minutes, the onion halves should be well charred on both sides. Scrape away part of the blackened surface and cut each half into 4 parts.

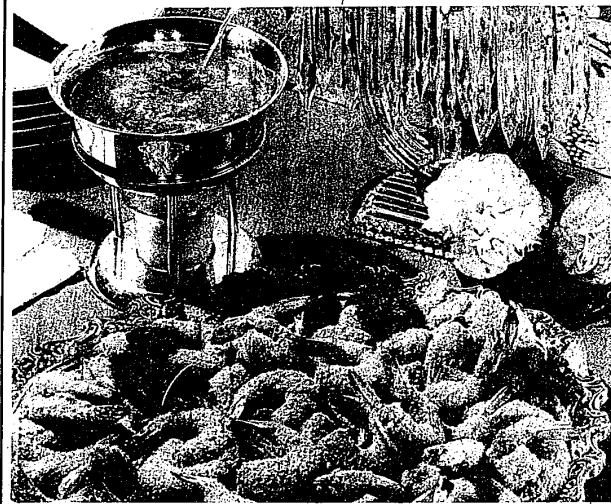
Add it to the bowl of peppers, tossing it with another pinch of salt and cracked pepper (The onion will be quite crunchy, which makes a nice contrast with the peppers, but it will also be very sweet, with no trace of sharpness.)

When you first turn the peppers, add the tomatoes, cut side down, to the grill. Turn when the flesh is partly charred. Season each half with ½ teaspoon of olive oil, a small pinch of salt, and the optional parsley, garlic, and bread crumbs and cook until they have shrunk by half and the skin is blackened.

Add the eggplant to the grill at the same time as the tomatoes. The cut side of each eggplant half should first be brushed with 1 tablespoon of olive oil. This cut side should face the fire and cook until it turns deep brown. It will become bitter if allowed to char. Turn the eggplant over and season each half with another tablespoon of olive oil. From time to time, pour ½ teaspoon of oil in between the cuts. The eggplant is done when it is creamy-tender. If cooked longer, it will become bitter.

When the eggplant is nearly done, put the zucchini on the grill. Brown on one side, turn over and cook until done, 5 to 8 minutes. Remove to a shallow bowl and season with a large pinch of salt, pepper, and about ¼ Tablespoon of oil.

When you turn the zucchini over, put the mushrooms on the grill. These take only about 1 minute to a side. Add them to the bowl of zucchini and season the same way. Makes 4 servings.



Curry adds zing to shrimp dish

Curried shrimp with hot marmalade soy dip is an old-fashioned recipe with an up-to-date flair.

CURRIED SHRIMP WITH HOT MARMALADE SOY SAUCE

- 2 pkg. (10 oz. each) frozen breaded shrimp
 - ¼ cup butter or margarine
 - 1 tsp. curry powder
 - Hot Marmalade Soy Dip (recipe follows)
- Cream together butter or margarine and curry powder. Spread curry butter over both sides of frozen shrimp. Arrange on shallow baking pan. Broil about three inches from heat for 8 to 10 minutes or until hot and browned, turning once. Serve with hot marmalade dip. Makes six servings.

HOT MARMALADE SOY DIP

- ¼ cup orange marmalade
 - ¼ cup lemon juice
 - ¼ cup soy sauce
 - 1 clove garlic, minced
 - Dash ginger
 - 1 tsp. cornstarch
- Combine ingredients; mix well. Cook, stirring constantly until clear and thickened. Makes three-fourths cup dip.

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