

Eggplant can be prepared in variety of ways

Eggplant is in season again. Don't miss the opportunity to add it to your menu for exotic (erotic?) enjoyment.

Eggplant is believed to be a really effective aphrodisiac. There is no end to the number of delectable recipes you can prepare using this vegetable.

I have heard some people say that they don't like eggplant. But there are so many different ways to prepare it I'm sure you can find one that appeals to almost anyone.

Eggplant originated in India and came to our country by way of France, where it has been cultivated since the early 1600s. It is also known as aubergine and melongene.

Eggplant comes in many varieties, both purple and white. There are long thin ones, very large round ones, and very tiny ones that are perfect for cooking whole and using as a garnish on the side of the dinner plate or meat platter.

MOST POPULAR, of course, is the medium-sized, plump, egg-shaped variety. The white ones do not have as strong a flavor as the purple ones.

When this vegetable is to be fried, grilled, or baked in the oven, you should sprinkle it heavily with salt and let it set, covered, for about an hour before using it. This makes its excess water ooze out.

Then wash it well with clear water, and dry it before proceeding with your recipe.



kitchen witch

Gundella

When properly prepared, the skin of the vegetable is also delicious. I especially like the tiny ones sautéed in their skins and the larger ones that have been stuffed and baked.

STUFFED EGGPLANT

To prepare eggplant for stuffing, you may use either of the following methods.

Method I

Cut the eggplant in half lengthwise, prick lightly with a fork and sprinkle thickly with salt. Allow them to stand about 30 minutes to an hour. Then rinse them thoroughly, dry them, and fry them in sizzling hot oil until tender.

Drain them well and scoop out the pulp, being very careful not to damage the skins. Reserve both the skins and the pulp.

Method II

Cut the eggplants in half lengthwise and boil in salted water for about 15 minutes or until tender.

Drain and remove the pulp with a spoon, being very careful to keep the skins intact. Save both the pulp and the skins.

There are countless ways to prepare the filling. Here are just a few you may choose from.

Filling I

Add to the pulp some lightly fried, chopped onions (about one tablespoon per eggplant), one hard-boiled egg (finely chopped), two tablespoons bread crumbs, chopped parsley, and salt, pepper and garlic to taste.

Fill the skins with this mixture and sprinkle the tops with finely grated bread crumbs, and oil or melted butter.

Place them in a buttered baking dish and bake at 350 degrees until golden brown on top.

Filling II

Mix seasoned sausage meat or ground lamb and bread crumbs with the pulp. Fill the skins. Sprinkle with bread crumbs and bake until meat is

thoroughly cooked.

Filling III

In a skillet, lightly sauté in oil or butter chopped green peppers and onions. Add chopped tomatoes, garlic, parsley and seasoning to taste. (I like to use Greek or Italian herb mixtures.)

Mix this with pulp of the eggplant and add a few bread crumbs. Fill the skins, and bake about 10 minutes at 350 degrees. Top with your favorite cheese and continue baking until cheese is bubbly and lightly browned.

Filling IV

Mix together with eggplant pulp 1 cup cooked lamb (chopped) 1 cup cooked rice 1/4 cup seedless raisins 1/4 cup pine nuts salt and pepper to taste

Pack the mixture into the eggplant skins and dot the tops with butter. Bake about 20 minutes at 350 degrees.

FRIED EGGPLANT

In a paper bag, mix together the following:

1/4 cup flour 1/4 cup very fine bread crumbs 1 teaspoon salt 1 teaspoon paprika 1/4 teaspoon pepper

1/4 teaspoon onion powder 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder 1/4 teaspoon thyme 1/4 teaspoon basil

Cut up one large, or two smaller eggplants, in round slices 1/2 to 3/4 inches thick. Or, you may cut it into thick strips about 3 inches long. After these have been soaked in salt water and dried (see above), place them in the bag with the flour mixture and shake until each piece is evenly coated.

Fry in hot oil a few at a time, until golden brown and tender (about 3-4 minutes). Make sure the pieces do not touch each other. Drain on paper towels and serve immediately.

Optional: Sprinkle lightly with powdered sugar before serving.

ARMENIAN EGGPLANT

1 eggplant 1/2 cup flour 3 tablespoons olive oil 4 large tomatoes, sliced 1 small onion, chopped salt pepper buttered bread crumbs

Wash eggplant. Peel and cut into cubes. Dredge with flour and sauté in hot olive oil until lightly browned.

Arrange alternate layers of eggplant, tomatoes and onion in a well-greased baking dish. Season each layer with salt and pepper. Cover with bread crumbs and bake

at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. (serves 4-6) (If desired, you may also use 1 pound of cooked and seasoned ground beef or lamb, and layer with the vegetables.)

EGGPLANT ITALIANO

1 large or 2 small eggplants 1/4 cup flour 1/4 cup olive oil 1 medium-sized onion one 8-ounce can tomato sauce 1/2 cup water 12 teaspoons chopped chives 12 teaspoons chopped pimiento 1/2 teaspoon oregano 1/4 teaspoon basil salt and pepper to taste 1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese 1/4 cup mozzarella cheese

Cut eggplant into 1/4-inch thick slices. Dust with flour and brown lightly in olive oil. Sauté garlic and onion until soft. Combine onion, garlic, water, tomato sauce and spices and mix well.

Arrange eggplant slices, tomato mixture and cheese in alternate layers, in a greased casserole dish, ending with a cheese layer.

Bake at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes.

Hint: Also very good — add layers of eggplant in your next pan of lasagna.

Note: If you have any questions about these, or any other recipes, you may call Gundella at 427-1072.

cooking calendar

FOOD FESTIVAL

More than 200 grocery stores will participate in the American Heart Association's Food Festival from Sunday, Sept. 10, to Saturday, Sept. 16. Michigan stores include Great Seal Foodland, Kroger, Jewel Foods, VG's Food Centers, D&W, Glenn's, Plumb Markets and various independent stores. Grocery store tours will be offered at many participating stores again this year to teach people how to make heart-healthy choices when purchasing food. Registered dietitians will lead the 1 1/2 hour tours. Tour participants will receive a free copy of the new publication "To Market To Market," a 16-page booklet which can be used while shopping. Store tours are free but because they are limited to 10 people each, you must register by phone. For more information call the American Heart Association of Michigan at 557-9500.

COOKING DEMOS

Nine Hudson's stores including eight in the Detroit area will host heart-healthy cooking demonstrations Sunday, Sept. 17, in cooperation with the American Heart Association of Michigan.

Demonstrations will begin at 1 p.m. in the Marketplace in each store and be repeated several times until 5 p.m. Those attending will get to sample the food prepared and will receive a copy of the recipe, along with cooking and baking tip cards, and brochures on how to eat heart-healthy, including the American Heart Association dietary guidelines. Metro-area Hudson's stores participating are Northland, Eastland, Southland, Twelve Oaks, Oakland Mall, Lakeside, Briarwood and Fairlane.

CANNING TIPS

"Old-time canning methods including open-kettle canning, paraffin sealing of jams and jellies, the inversion method and use of zinc, antique or commercial lids are unsafe," says Sylvia Treiman, home economist of the Oakland County Cooperative Extension Service. New, updated canning procedures and recipes should be carefully followed to assure a safe product with a good shelf life. If you are a new canner or just find you are confused on which new procedures to follow, help is available. The Oakland County Cooperative Extension Service offers a hotline for all your food preservation question, Mondays-Fridays, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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TEL-TWELVE SHOPPING CENTER

Saturday, Sept. 16, at the Kitchen Shop in Dearborn. Cooking demonstrations featuring tailgate party ideas will be given by Peg Watson from 1-3 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 20, at the Kitchen Shop in Dearborn; from 1-3 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 21, at the Kitchen Shop in Birmingham; and from 1-3 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 23, at the Kitchen Shop in Dearborn. Cooking demonstrations featuring the Gerber Knife Sharpener and Chef's Choice will be given from 2-4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 23, at the Kitchen Shop in Birmingham.

Cooking demonstrations by Peg Watson will be given from 1-3 p.m.

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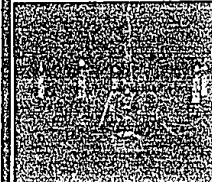
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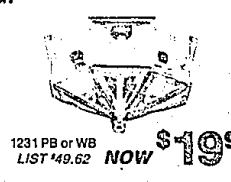
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