

by Julia Child

This classic French casserole is now associated with a cartoon rat, but the dish—a delicious stew of eggplant, onions, tomatoes, bell peppers, and zucchini—inspires rave reviews, too.

Yield: 6 servings

ingredients

1/2 pound eggplant
1/2 pound zucchini, trimmed
1 teaspoon salt
7 tablespoons olive oil, divided
1 8-ounce onion, thinly sliced (about 2 cups)
2 green bell peppers, thinly sliced into strips
2 garlic cloves, pressed
1 pound firm but ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeded, cut into 3/8- to 1/4-inch-thick strips
3 tablespoons minced fresh parsley

preparation

Peel eggplant; cut lengthwise into 1/4-inch-thick slices, then cut into 3-inch-long, 1-inch-wide strips. Cut zucchini into same size strips. Place vegetables in large bowl; sprinkle with 1 teaspoon salt. Let stand 30 minutes. Drain; dry with paper towels.

Heat 4 tablespoons oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Working in batches, add eggplant and zucchini to skillet; sauté until light golden, about 1 minute per side. Transfer to plate; reserve.

Add 3 tablespoons oil to skillet; heat over medium heat. Add onion and peppers; sauté until just tender, 10 to 12 minutes. Stir in garlic. Season with salt and pepper.

Place tomato strips atop onion-pepper mixture in skillet. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cover skillet; cook over low heat until tomatoes begin to juice, about 5 minutes. Uncover; baste vegetables in skillet with juices. Boil until juices are almost evaporated, 2 to 3 minutes.

Transfer 1/3 of onion-pepper-tomato mixture to 2 1/2-quart pot; sprinkle with 1 tablespoon parsley. Top with half of eggplant and half of zucchini, then remaining onion-pepper-tomato mixture; sprinkle with 1 tablespoon parsley. Layer remaining eggplant and zucchini over; sprinkle with 1 tablespoon parsley. Cover; simmer over low heat 10 minutes. Uncover; tilt pot and baste with accumulated juices. Increase heat to medium; simmer uncovered, basting several times with pan juices until only 2 to 3 tablespoons juices remain in pot, watching closely to avoid scorching, 10 to 15 minutes longer. Season with salt and pepper. *DO AHEAD: Can be made 8 hours ahead. Cool slightly.*

Cover; chill. Serve at room temperature or rewarm over medium-low heat before serving.

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