

Vegetable Moussaka

This is a really flavoursome main course dish. It can be served with warm fresh bread for a hearty, satisfying meal.

Ingredients

450ml / 1lb aubergines, sliced
115g / 4oz / ½ cup whole green lentils
600ml / 1 pint / 2 ½ cups vegetable stock
1 bay leaf
45ml / 3 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, sliced
1 garlic clove, crushed
225g / 8oz / 3 cups mushrooms, sliced
400g / 14oz can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
400g / 14oz can chopped tomatoes
30ml / 2 tbsp tomato puree
10ml / 2 tsp dried herbes de Provence
300ml / ½ pint / 1 ¼ cups natural yogurt
3 eggs
50g / 2oz mature Cheddar cheese, grated
salt and freshly ground black pepper
sprigs of fresh flat leaf parsley, to garnish

Serves 6

Step One

Sprinkle the aubergine slices with salt and place in a colander. Cover and place a weight on top. Leave for at least 30 minutes, to allow the bitter juices to be extracted.

Step Two

Meanwhile, place the lentils, stock and bay leaf in a saucepan, cover, bring to the boil and simmer for about 20 minutes, until the lentils are just tender but not mushy. Add a little extra water if necessary. Drain thoroughly and keep warm.

Step Three

Heat 15ml / 1 tbsp of the oil in a large saucepan, add the onion and garlic and cook for 5 minutes, stirring. Stir in the lentils, mushrooms, chickpeas, tomatoes, tomato puree, herbs, and 45ml / 3 tbsp water. Bring to the boil, cover, and simmer gently for 10-15 minutes, stirring from time to time.

Step Four

Preheat the oven to 180 degrees C / 350 degrees F. Rinse the aubergine slices, drain, and pat dry. Heat the remaining oil in a frying pan and fry the slices in batches for 3-4 minutes, turning once to brown both sides.

Step Five

Season the lentil mixture with salt and pepper. Arrange a layer of aubergine slices in the bottom of a large, shallow, ovenproof dish or roasting tin, then spoon over a layer of the lentil mixture. Continue to build up the layers in this way until all the aubergine slices and lentil mixture are used up.

Step Six

Beat the yogurt, eggs, salt and pepper together and pour the mixture over the dish. Sprinkle generously with the grated Cheddar cheese and bake for about 45 minutes, until the topping is golden brown and bubbling. Serve immediately, garnished with the flat leaf parsley.