

Baked Eggplant & Zucchini Parmigiana

Adapted from Evan Kalman

INGREDIENTS

- 6 small zucchini – washed and trimmed
- extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup white wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 pinch red pepper flakes
- 4 large garlic cloves – thinly sliced
- 4 tablespoons chopped fresh basil leaves
- 4 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley leaves
- 6 small Italian eggplants – washed and trimmed
- 6 cups pomodoro sauce – recipe below
- 16 oz (about 2 balls) buffalo mozzarella – sliced 1/8-inch thick
- Parmigiano cheese – for grating
- Freshly cracked pepper and flaky sea salt – to season

STEPS

Slice the zucchini lengthwise (top to bottom) into 1/4-inch thick slices. Place the zucchini in a colander, sprinkle with salt, and set aside to drain for 2 hours.

After the zucchini drain, heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a grill pan over medium-high heat. Grill until slightly charred on both sides, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer to a shallow bowl and scatter the garlic, basil, and parsley on top.

In a small saucepan, bring the vinegar and sugar to a boil over high heat. Add the red pepper flakes and a pinch of salt. Pour the hot brine over the zucchini and let marinate for at least 1 hour but preferably 3 hours.

While the zucchini marinates, preheat the oven to 450 F.

Oil a baking sheet with 3 to 4 tablespoons of extra-virgin olive oil. Slice each eggplant lengthwise (top to bottom) into 1/4-inch thick slices. Transfer the eggplant slices to the oiled baking sheet, season with salt and drizzle a little more oil on top. Bake the eggplant without turning until the slices begin turning brown, about 15 minutes. Remove the eggplant from the oven and place them on a plate to cool.

When you are ready to assemble the parmigiana, preheat the oven to 350 F and have your sauce, eggplant, and zucchini ready. Slice the mozzarella into 1/8-inch thick slices and place next to the other ingredients. In a medium-sized baking dish (or individual ones), spread some sauce just to cover the bottom. Place a slice of eggplant on top of

the sauce and then enough zucchini slices to cover it. Try to keep everything roughly the same size. Cut the zucchini to make it fit. Place a slice of mozzarella over the vegetables and sprinkle with about 2 teaspoons of grated Parmigiano. Gently press down to keep everything in place. Repeat until you have 4 layers of ingredients. Top with some sauce and more Parmigiano. Season with a little salt and pepper.

Transfer the assembled dish to the oven and bake until the vegetables are very soft and the sauce is bubbling, about 30-45 minutes.

To serve, transfer one stack to an individual plate and top with freshly grated Parmigiano.

Basic Pomodoro Sauce

INGREDIENTS

- 30 ml (2 tablespoons) extra-virgin olive oil
- 6 large garlic cloves – peeled and diced
- 1 large yellow onion – sliced
- leaves from 1 spring of fresh rosemary
- 1 fresh bay leaf
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 8 cups canned whole peeled tomatoes
- 3/4 cup unsalted butter – cut into small cubes
- Salt to taste

STEPS

In a medium pot, warm the olive oil over medium heat. Add the garlic, onion, rosemary, bay leaf, and red pepper flakes and saute until the onion is translucent, about 10 minutes. If the onions begin to brown, lower the heat. Add the tomatoes and butter and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the sauce is slightly thick and soft but not pasty, about 30 minutes. The butter should emulsify into the sauce. Season with salt. Remove bay leaf and puree until smooth.

To store, transfer to an airtight container and refrigerate for up to 2 days or freeze up to 1 month.

ENJOY! 😊