

Vegan Eggplant Parmesan

What would eggplant season be without a vegan version of eggplant parm? In this version I cut out the breading and frying making it a healthier and simpler dish to prepare. And because it's now eggplant season in Texas expect to see a few more recipes that feature this summertime superstar.

Ingredients

- 3 medium-large eggplants, cut crosswise into 1/2-inch slices, to prevent bitterness use eggplants that have been recently picked.
- Olive oil
- 1 large onion, peeled and finely chopped
- 2 shallots, peeled and sliced thin
- 1 ½ teaspoons fresh or dried oregano
- 1 28-ounce can or jar of chopped tomatoes
- 1-2 TBL of tomato paste
- 1 splash of maple syrup
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- ½ cup (packed) fresh basil leaves
- ½ cup freshly grated Vegan Parmesan
- ⅓ cup fine gluten free bread crumbs
- Vegan Mozzarella (optional)
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano or basil leaves for serving

Directions

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Brush both sides of eggplant slices with oil, and place in a single layer on two or more baking sheets. Bake until undersides are golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes, then turn and bake until other sides are lightly browned. Set aside.

Reduce oven temperature to 375 degrees.

While eggplant cooks, heat a small amount of olive oil in a heavy saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and sauté until soft, about 10 minutes. Add shallots and dried oregano cooking another few minutes.

Add tomatoes and their juices, cover, and simmer 15 to 20 minutes. Add tomato paste, maple syrup, basil and salt and pepper to taste.

Into a casserole or iron skillet as I used, spoon a small amount of tomato sauce, then add a thin scattering of parmesiano, then a single layer of eggplant. Repeat until all ingredients are used, ending with a little sauce and a sprinkling of parmesiano.

In a small bowl, combine bread crumbs and oregano with just enough olive oil to moisten. Sprinkle on top. Bake until eggplant mixture is bubbly and center is hot, 30 to 45 minutes depending on size of pan and thickness of layers. If you'd like, you can take it up a notch add a light layer of Myiko's liquid mozzarella or another mozzarella of choice. Allow another 5 mins in the oven and then set aside to rest at least 5 minutes before serving.

Enjoy!

Herbed Mushroom Pizza

Have you ever cooked a pizza in your cast iron skillet? The results are truly amazing and if you can manage to do this in a convection toaster you can enjoy fresh made pizza without a sweltering kitchen.

Here's a no-recipe walk thru to guide you through the assembly process.

Ingredients

Crust

I suggest you make up this gluten free pizza dough or use your own pizza dough. Set aside prepared dough while preparing the topping. An 8-9" cast iron skillet can accommodate 7 oz or 200 grams of dough.

Coarse ground cornmeal for dusting bottom of skillet.

Herbed Mushroom Topping

- 3 large shallots peeled and sliced into strips.
- A large head of mother of pearl oyster mushrooms, separate layers and slice lengthwise to create strips.
- Generous amounts of fresh or dried thyme, rosemary, and oregano
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Olive Oil

Directions

1. In a heated skillet add 1-2 TBL of oil, add mushrooms being careful not to crowd. Set a plate that fits inside the skillet on top of the the mushrooms and press down several times to release water during the cooking process.
2. Remove the plate and continue pressing down with a spatula until they are tender. Flip and repeat. Mushrooms should be crispy on the exterior, moist inside and golden in color. Remove to a bowl, seasoning well with herbs, salt and pepper. Return pan to low heat and add shallots, stirring to not burn, cook until translucent. Add shallots to herbed mushrooms.
3. Preheat oven with to 450 degrees with iron skillet or alternatively use a pizza stone.
4. Roll dough to fit the skillet.

5. Once oven is ready work quickly to keep pan hot. Sprinkle bottom of pan with cornmeal, slide in circle of dough and fill the center area with mushroom mixture.
 6. Bake for 15-20 mins depending on oven, crust will be golden brown.
 7. Consider adding your favorite vegan cheese the last minutes of baking or leaving it as is to enjoy the herbed flavor.
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All the Flavors Cabbage Salad

Spicy, sweet, salty, you name it, this salad has it all. So cool and refreshing, it's the perfect summer salad. This one was inspired by our soaring Texas temps and my day-long attempt not to wilt. Have some fun subbing in what you have on hand, but remember that the end goal is to keep it textured and crunchy.

Ingredients

Salad

- $\frac{1}{2}$ head of purple cabbage chopped
- 2 medium cucumbers cut into bite-sized chunks
- $\frac{1}{2}$ small red onion peeled and diced
- 1 jalapeno or your favorite pepper diced fine (remove the seeds to reduce the heat)
- 1 tart apple seeded and chopped
- A handful of toasted chopped nuts of choice
- 2- 3 TBL of toasted sesame seeds
- Salt and Pepper to taste

Dressing

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup tahini (a pourable brand is a bit easier to work with)
- 4 to 6 tablespoons lime or lemon juice, to taste
- 1-2 TBL of rice vinegar
- 2-3 TBL maple syrup or honey, to taste
- Fresh herbs (your choice of dill, basil, parsley, cilantro)
- Filtered water to thin to desired consistency
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt

Directions

1. Place all salad ingredients in a large bowl and mix with tongs or your hands.
2. Place all dressing ingredients in a small food processor or a glass jar and use an immersion blender, processing until smooth. Add dressing a bit at a time, careful not to drown the veggies.
3. Chill well and enjoy!

Buckwheat Crackers

Thought these might be a lovely snack for my sweetheart. He'll take them along on his cross Atlantic flight Monday, headed to Germany where he will be with his mom for a stretch post surgery. And of course I couldn't help but hold back a few to enjoy myself. Recipe adapted from Aran Goyoaga.

Makes 2 large sheets or 4 toaster oven sized baking sheets.

Ingredients

- 1 cup (120 g) light buckwheat flour
- 1/2 cup (50 g) almond flour
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup (225 g) hot water
- 1/4 cup (55 g) extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup (35 g) pumpkin seeds
- 1/4 cup (35 g) sesame seeds
- 2 teaspoons fennel seeds
- Flaky salt, for sprinkling
- Black pepper, for sprinkling

Directions

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together the buckwheat and almond flour, salt, hot water, and olive oil until smooth. The batter, like heavy cream or very thin pancake batter, will be runny. Add more water if needed.
2. Cover the bowl and let the batter rest for 20 minutes.
3. Measure and mix seeds together in a small bowl.
4. Preheat oven to 300F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.
5. The batter will have thickened slightly but will remain pourable and thin. Pour half of the batter on a baking sheet if using large sheets or one fourth if using the smaller sheets.
6. Evenly spread the batter until it is paper thin and reaches the edges of the pan.
7. Sprinkle a portion of the seed blend across the top of the batter and gently press them down. Sprinkle a little bit of flaky salt and freshly ground black pepper over the top.
8. Bake for 15 minutes. Rotating the baking sheet and continue baking for another 15 minutes.
9. The cracker should be golden brown and dry.

10. Gently remove the cracker from the baking sheet, lifting the parchment paper's ends. Place the cracker directly on the oven rack and continue baking for another 5 to 10 minutes until it is completely dry on the bottom.
 11. Repeat process for each sheet.
 12. Cool completely on a rack. Break into large shards. Store the crackers in an air-tight container. They keep for several days.
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Summer Corn Risotto

With four fresh-from-the-farm ears of corn in my fridge, I took the liberty of adapting Emily Weinstein's adaptation of Corn Risotto. If you can carve out 90 minutes of cooking time this risotto is worth every bit of effort. Emily suggests preparing a corn stock and I wouldn't pass that up. It was simple hands-off work and give this classic Italian dish a different spin.

Ingredients

Corn Stock

- 2 corn cobs (kernels removed and set aside for risotto)
- 1 onion, unpeeled, cut into quarters
- 1 carrot, cut into 1-inch pieces
- Dark green leaves from 1 leek (white and light green parts set aside for risotto)
- 1 veggie bouillon cube
- 1 teaspoon whole black peppercorns or several turns of fresh ground pepper

Place all ingredients in a saucepan and cover completely with water. Cover pan, bring to a boil, and reduce to just a simmer

for a minimum of 30 mins. The stock could be prepared in advance and reheated.

Risotto

- A minimum of 8 cups corn stock or prepared vegetable stock
- A pinch of saffron threads, covered with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of boiling water to bloom
- 1 T of olive oil
- 2 T of unsalted vegan butter
- white and light green parts of leek finely chopped
- 1 cup arborio rice, the better the quality the better the finished dish
- raw corn kernels from the two ears of corn
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the thick cream from a can of coconut milk (optional)
- Salt & black pepper to taste
- 1 cup grated vegan parmesan cheese or 2-3 T of nutritional yeast
- 2 tablespoons chopped Italian parsley

Directions

1. Heat oil in a heavy dutch oven or lidded saucepan and add diced leek. Keep heat low so as not to burn the leeks. Once they are softened add vegan butter and rice. Stir well until rice is coated and glistening.
2. Bring stock in its own saucepan to a low simmer and ladle into rice, stirring constantly, over low to medium heat until absorbed. This is a process you will continue until rice is al dente, there is still a bite to the center, and will take about 20 minutes.
3. Add saffron water and corn kernels, stirring well. Remove from heat, cover, and allow to sit for 10 mins. Check the rice to see if it is now cooked through, add coconut cream if desired, and adjust the seasoning.

4. Mix in or top each serving with the grated cheese and parsley.

Enjoy!