

Sicilian Aubergine Stew

Seasonal fall aubergine (eggplants) are still plentiful here in Austin. This week there were still a few hanging around when my next CSA delivery was due and this was the perfect way to put them to use.

You may choose to serve this stew as I did with some gluten-free pasta, or perhaps a mound of quinoa, a square of polenta or just as it is.

Ingredients

olive oil

2 large aubergines , cut into large chunks

1 heaped teaspoon dried oregano

sea salt

freshly ground black pepper

1 small red onion , peeled and finely chopped

2 cloves garlic , peeled and finely sliced

1 small bunch fresh flat-leaf parsley , leaves picked and stalks finely chopped

2 tablespoons salted capers , rinsed, soaked and drained

1 handful green olives , stones removed

2-3 tablespoons best-quality herb vinegar

5 large ripe tomatoes , roughly chopped

2 tablespoons slivered almonds , lightly toasted

To Prepare:

Cut the aubergine into large chunks, keep them good sized as cutting the pieces too small will cause them to soak up the oil and lose their shape. Peel and finely chop the onion, then peel and finely slice the garlic. Pick and chop the parsley leaves and finely chop the stalks.

Rinse, soak and drain the capers and remove the pits from the olive. Roughly chop the tomatoes. Toast the almonds in a pan

watching closely or in an oven until light brown.

In a large enough pan to accommodate all or half of the aubergine chunks heat several tablespoons of olive oil. Add aubergine chunks (all or half in batches) oregano, and a bit of salt. Flip the chunks so that all are evenly coated with the oil while cooking on a high heat for 4 or 5 minutes. When the aubergines are golden on each side, add the onion, garlic and parsley stalks and continue cooking for another couple of minutes. Be sure to add a little more oil to the pan if you feel it's getting too dry.

Throw in the drained capers and the olives, and drizzle over the herb vinegar. When all the vinegar has evaporated, add the tomatoes and simmer covered for 15 -20 minutes or until tender.

Taste before serving and season if desired with salt, black pepper and a little more vinegar. Drizzle with a good quality olive oil and serve sprinkled with the chopped parsley leaves and the almonds.

Courtesy of Jamie Oliver