

Roasted Eggplant with Spiced Chickpeas

If you eat seasonally and live in Texas, late summer means eggplant, zucchini and peppers. And the best way to use this limited range of veggies is to get creative – something I don't mind doing. This week, with a nudge from Julie Moskin, we enjoyed this gorgeous, Middle Eastern-inspired dish.

Ingredients

- 3-4 narrow eggplants, sliced into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick wheels (be sure to choose eggplants with shiny skin and that feel heavy for their size)
- Sunflower oil and olive oil
- 1 onion, minced
- 1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 2 teaspoons allspice
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 3 tablespoons pomegranate molasses
- Splash of maple syrup
- Salt and black pepper
- 2 15-ounce cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed (about 1 cup)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup pine nuts, toasted for garnish
- Fresh mint leaves, for garnish
- Plant-based yogurt for serving (optional)

Directions

1. In a large cast-iron or heavy skillet, heat enough sunflower oil to cover the bottom of the pan, over medium heat. Fill the bottom of the skillet with eggplant, cooking 5-7 minutes until golden and softened, then flipping to produce the same effect on the other side. Remove with tongs or fork to a platter kept warm

- in the oven. Continue until all eggplant is cooked.
2. Wipe out the cast iron skillet and heat enough olive oil to cover the bottom of the pan, over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring, until soft and translucent, about 10 minutes. Add tomatoes, spices and molasses, and bring to a simmer. Add maple syrup, salt and pepper to taste (adjust seasonings until you have created a hint of both spice and sweetness). Simmer until slightly thickened, about 15 minutes. Add chickpeas and cook until thick, 5 to 10 minutes more.
 3. To serve, place slices of eggplant on a plate and spoon tomato-chickpea mixture on top. Garnish with mint and toasted pine nuts, and serve with yogurt if desired. Repeat for each serving.

Enjoy!

Adapted from Julie Moskin's recipe in the New York Times