

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!