



Eggplant

Plant: Eggplant seeds must be started indoors 8-10 weeks prior to last frost. Sow seeds $\frac{1}{4}$ " deep and provide a soil temperature of 75-80°F. Even moisture is essential while the eggplant seed is germinating. Germination is slow (up to 2 weeks). Gradually harden off seedlings, but do not allow temperature to go below 60°F. Transplant 18" apart in beds or rows 20-30" apart.

Grow: Heat loving eggplant require a full sun and sheltered area. Black paper or plastic mulch will help draw heat to the soil and encourage an early maturity. It will also help to conserve moisture and keep weeds down. Eggplants are moderate feeders and do well in very fertile soil with a pH level of 5.5 to 6.8. Apply compost and well rotted manure along with bonemeal.

Harvest: Harvest eggplant anytime after the fruit reaches half of their size. Harvesting eggplant early prevents fruit from becoming too seedy and will encourage more production and eggplant yield.

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size 1 cup, cubes (82g)			
Amount Per Serving			
Calories	20	Calories from Fat	1
		% Daily Value*	
Total Fat	0g		0%
Saturated Fat	0g		0%
Cholesterol	0mg		0%
Sodium	2mg		0%
Total Carbohydrate	5g		2%
Dietary Fiber	3g		11%
Sugars	2g		
Protein	1g		
Vitamin A	0%	Vitamin C	3%
Calcium	1%	Iron	1%

Nutritional Information:

Eggplant is an excellent source of dietary fiber, vitamin A (in the form of beta-carotene), B vitamins, folate and vitamin C.

How to Prepare: Eggplant can be cooked using several methods, such as frying, stir-frying, grilling, broiling, baking, and roasting. When cooking eggplant be sure to cook it thoroughly. When cooked properly it will have a flavor of its own and will have a creamy smooth texture. Salting eggplant prior to cooking is a preparation method some cooks use to extract bitterness out of an eggplant.



Eggplant Parmesan Casserole

Yields: 10

Serving size: 1 slice

Ingredients

2 (1-pound) eggplants, peeled and cut crosswise into 1/2-inch-thick slices
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
1 tablespoon water
2 cups whole-wheat panko (Japanese breadcrumbs)
1/4 cup (1 ounce) grated fresh Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
Cooking spray
1/2 cup torn fresh basil
1/4 cup (1 ounce) grated fresh Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper 1 1/2 teaspoons minced
1/4 teaspoon salt 1 (16-ounce) container part-skim ricotta cheese 1 large egg, lightly beaten
1 (24-ounce) jar premium pasta sauce
1/4 teaspoon salt 8 ounces thinly sliced mozzarella
3/4 cup (3 ounces) finely grated fontina cheese

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 375° F.
2. To make eggplant, combine 2 eggs and 1 tablespoon water in a shallow dish. Combine panko and 1/4 cup Parmigiano-Reggiano in a second shallow dish. Dip eggplant in egg mixture; dredge in panko mixture, pressing gently to adhere and shaking off excess. Place eggplant 1 inch apart on baking sheets coated with cooking spray. Bake at 375° for 30 minutes or until golden, turning once and rotating baking sheets after 15 minutes.
3. To make filling, combine basil and next 6 ingredients (through egg).
4. To assemble, spoon 1/2 cup pasta sauce in bottom of a 13 x 9-inch glass baking dish coated with cooking spray. Layer half of eggplant slices over pasta sauce. Sprinkle eggplant with 1/8 teaspoon salt. Top with about 3/4 cup pasta sauce; spread half of ricotta mixture over sauce, and top with a third of mozzarella and 1/4 cup fontina. Repeat layers once, ending with about 1 cup pasta sauce.
5. Cover tightly with aluminum foil coated with cooking spray. Bake at 375° for 35 minutes. Remove foil; top with remaining third of mozzarella and 1/4 cup fontina. Bake at 375° for 10 minutes or until sauce is bubbly and cheese melts; cool 10 minutes.

Nutrition Facts per Serving:

318 calories, 15 g fat, 27 g carbohydrates, 5 g fiber, 20 g protein