



Another delicious recipe
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MIDI-POCHE (EGGPLANT BAKE)

SERVES 4

This hearty dish is a staple in Provence, where it is served at least once a week for dinner, supper, and sometimes next morning's breakfast as well. It is good both cold and hot.

- 2 small eggplants (about $\frac{3}{4}$ pound total), cubed
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon plus $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium shallot, minced
- 1 small yellow onion, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 3 cups chopped, seeded tomatoes (about 2 pounds)
- Pinch of granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon chopped fresh thyme, or a pinch of dried thyme
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh basil, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons dried basil
- 1 teaspoon crushed allspice
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup cooked rice

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¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

1. Place the sliced eggplant in a colander over a sink. Sprinkle it with lemon juice and 1 tablespoon of the salt. Let stand 30 minutes to “sweat” the eggplant, and drain.
2. Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan over medium heat, warm 2 tablespoons of the butter and 1 tablespoon of the olive oil. When the oil begins to shimmer, add the shallot and onion, and cook for 2 minutes. Stir in the garlic; cook for 1 minute. Add the tomatoes and sprinkle with the sugar. Add the thyme, basil, allspice, and the remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Lower the heat to medium-low and cook, uncovered, for 20 minutes. Set aside.
3. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
4. Wipe the eggplant slices dry with paper toweling to remove excess salt and moisture. Dust the eggplant lightly with the flour. In a heavy-bottomed skillet over medium heat, warm the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter and 1 tablespoon of oil and sauté the eggplant until it turns golden on both sides. Remove from the heat and drain on paper towels.
5. Spoon about one-quarter of the tomato sauce over the bottom of an ovenproof baking dish or casserole. Layer half of the eggplant over the sauce. Sprinkle the eggplant with half of the rice and then spoon half of the remaining tomato sauce over the rice. Top with half of the grated Parmesan cheese. Repeat one more layer with the remaining eggplant, rice, tomato sauce, and cheese.
6. Bake until the *midi-poche* turns bubbly and the cheese has melted, 15 to 20 minutes. Serve hot or at room temperature.

— *Recipe by Bert Greene, author of Greene on Greens; from Bounty from the Box: The CSA Farm Cookbook by Mi Ae Lipe*