

## **EGGPLANT**

### **Storage Tips**

- Eggplant is best eaten fresh. Best is stored at a cool room temp. & not in the fridge.

### **Culinary Tips**

- Eggplant can be peeled but isn't necessary, especially with the skinny Asian varieties.
- Slice eggplant & lightly salt. Let sit for 10-15 min. then squeeze out excess liquid. This reduces the amount of oil needed to cook the eggplant.
- Top pasta with sauteed eggplant.
- Grill slices of eggplant with other vegetables.
- Dip chunks of eggplant in flour or in eggs & seasoned breadcrumbs. Saute in hot oil until lightly brown. Season with herbs, garlic, grated cheese, etc.
- Add to stir fries or pasta sauce.

### **Crostini with Roasted Eggplant and Pine Nut Puree**

Makes 1 cup of puree

1 lb eggplant or a little more  
Olive oil  
1/3 cup pine nuts or walnuts  
1 garlic clove  
Sea salt and freshly ground pepper  
Fresh lemon juice  
1 TBS chopped mint  
1 TBS chopped parsley  
1 TBS chopped basil  
12 slices toasted baguette or crackers

1. Preheat the broiler. Peel the eggplant and slice it into rounds about ½ inch thick. Brush both sides of each slice lightly with oil, set on a sheet pan, and broil about 6 inches from the heat until golden, 12 to 15 minutes. Turn and brown on the other side. When done, stack the eggplant slices so that they'll steam and finish cooking. Toast the pine nuts in a dry skillet over low heat until golden. (If using walnuts, toast them in a 350 degree oven for 7 to 10 minutes, until fragrant).

2. Pound the garlic and pine nuts with ½ tsp salt until smooth. Coarsely chop the eggplant, then work into a somewhat rough puree with the pestle or in a food processor. Add a little lemon juice to sharpen the flavors, taste for salt, season with pepper, and stir in the herbs. Spread the puree on the toasted bread or crackers, garnish with a basil leaf, and pass around as an appetizer.

Suggested by Delmar member, *Chris VonBuelow*

### **Ratatouille**

3 tablespoons olive oil  
2 patty pan squash, or summer squash or zucchini  
1/2 cup roughly chopped onion  
2 or 3 cloves garlic, roughly chopped

5 to 6 cups diced eggplant pieces, about 1 inch in diameter  
1 1/2 cups roughly chopped tomato, about 4 medium tomatoes, skins removed  
1 tablespoon minced oregano  
1 tablespoon minced basil  
1 tablespoon minced parsley  
1 cup chicken or vegetable broth  
2 tablespoons tomato paste  
1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce  
1 teaspoon salt  
Freshly ground black pepper to taste

Peel eggplant, cut into pieces about 1 inch in diameter, salt well and place in colander to drain for about 20—30 minutes. Rinse well with water. Cut squash or zucchini into chunks about the same size as the eggplant. In a medium or large non-stick skillet, heat 2 tablespoons of oil and carefully add eggplant. In a large non-stick pot, heat 1 tablespoon oil and add squash, onions and garlic. Flip or stir the eggplant allowing it to brown over medium to high heat, approximately 10 minutes, meanwhile stirring squash, onions and garlic occasionally. Do not brown garlic! Add browned eggplant and the rest of the ingredients to squash and onion mixture. Let simmer for approximately 10 minutes. Ratatouille should be a thick and chunky, like a good stew. Add a little more broth if you prefer it somewhat thinner. Good over rice or pasta, by itself as a side dish or as topping for crostini.