

VEGETABLE RATATOUILLE*Courtesy of Nora Fiji, The Wedge Co-op, Minneapolis, Minn.***Ingredients**

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|---|---|
| 2 medium eggplants, fresh | 4 tablespoons minced garlic |
| 1/2 cup olive oil | 4 cups diced tomatoes, fresh or canned (36 oz.) |
| 2 medium yellow onions, julienned | |
| 1 green bell pepper, seeded and rough chopped | 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley |
| 2 red bell peppers, seeded and rough chopped | 1 tablespoon dried herbs de provence (or 2 teaspoons dried thyme) |
| 2 large zucchinis, quartered and cut into chunks | 1 bay leaf |
| | 2 teaspoons salt |
| | 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper |

Directions

Peel and cube eggplant; salt it and let it drain for about 20 minutes. Then, rinse and pat dry. Toss with 1/4 cup olive oil and roast in the oven for 20 minutes or until tender.

While the eggplant is roasting, heat the remaining oil over medium heat in a large, heavy pot. Sauté the onions 10 minutes; then add the garlic and sauté until tender and lightly browned. Add the peppers and sauté 5 minutes; then add the zucchini and cook for 10 more minutes. Add the tomatoes, remaining ingredients and let it simmer for 20 minutes. Taste, adjust seasoning and add eggplant, simmer a few minutes more and serve.

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MACARONI AND CHEDDAR CHEESE

Ingredients

1 tablespoon vegetable or olive oil
 2 tablespoons butter
 3 tablespoons flour
 1-1/2 cups whole or 2-percent milk
 3 cups shredded white cheddar cheese
 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg, freshly grated or ground

1/4 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
 (a couple pinches)

Salt to taste

1 pound elbow macaroni, cooked 8 minutes
 or to al dente

Directions

Heat a medium, deep skillet over medium heat. Add oil and butter. When butter melts into the oil, add flour and combine. Gently cook, whisking flour and butter together, until smooth and the flour has had a chance to cook, about 3 minutes. Slowly add milk while continuing to whisk. Gently bring milk to a bubble while stirring frequently. Allow the milk to thicken a bit, then stir in 2 cups of shredded Cheddar cheese, a handful at a time. Add nutmeg and cayenne to the sauce. Taste and add a little salt, if desired. Add cooked pasta to sauce and coat completely by turning over and over in the cheese sauce. Transfer to a baking dish and top with remaining cheese. Place baking dish under a hot broiler and brown the Cheddar cheese on top.

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