RECIPE

# Baked Eggplant Parmesan with Brown Rice

A dinner of roasted eggplant, a quick tomato and spinach sauce and measured part-skim mozzarella and Parmesan, baked in layers and served over brown rice.

MAKES

6 servings US Metric

TOTAL

1 h 25 min

## Ingredients

- [ ] 1 ¾ lb eggplant, ends trimmed, skin on, sliced into ½-inch rounds
- [ ] 1 ½ tbsp olive oil, for the eggplant
- [ ] ¼ tsp salt, for the eggplant
- [ ] 1 tsp olive oil, for the onion
- [ ] ½ cup chopped onion
- [ ] 1 tsp garlic powder
- [ ] 2 tsp dried oregano leaves
- [ ] 2 tsp dried basil leaves
- [ ] 3 cups no-salt-added canned whole tomatoes with their juice, crushed (most of one 28-ounce can)
- [ ] ¼ tsp salt, for the sauce
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper
- [ ] 3 cups packed baby spinach
- [ ] 1 ¼ cups shredded part-skim (reduced-fat) mozzarella

## Method

1. Heat the oven to 425 °F. Line two sheet pans with parchment.
2. Toss the eggplant rounds with 1½ tbsp olive oil and ¼ tsp salt until every slice is slick. Spread them in one layer on the pans, not touching.
3. Roast 25 to 30 minutes, turning the slices once halfway, until the edges are browned and a fork slides in with no push. Take the pans out and turn the oven down to 350 °F.
4. While the eggplant roasts, put 1 tsp olive oil and the onion in a wide pot over medium heat. Cook 5 minutes, until soft and see-through.

- [ ] ¼ cup grated Parmesan (for a vegetarian dish, use a parmesan-style cheese made with microbial rennet)
- [ ] 3 cups cooked brown rice, cooked without salt, to serve

5. Stir in the garlic powder, oregano and basil, then the crushed tomatoes, ¼ tsp salt and the pepper. Simmer, stirring now and then, about 20 minutes: 15 minutes at sea level, a quarter longer a mile up because simmering is slower there. It is ready when a spoon drawn across the pan leaves a trail that stays open.

6. Stir the spinach into the sauce a handful at a time. Cook 1 to 2 minutes, until it wilts.

7. Spread ½ cup of the sauce over the bottom of a 9×13-inch baking dish. Lay half the eggplant over it, then half the remaining sauce, then half the mozzarella.

8. Repeat with the rest of the eggplant, sauce and mozzarella. Scatter the Parmesan on top.

9. Bake uncovered at 350 °F for 25 to 30 minutes, until the sauce bubbles at the edges and the cheese is melted and spotted brown. If you want more colour, finish 2 minutes under the broiler, watching it.

10. Rest 10 minutes so it cuts into neat squares. Cut 6 pieces and serve each over a half cup of brown rice.