Sides / France

Provençal Ratatouille

Summer's abundance — eggplant, zucchini, tomato, and pepper — slow-roasted with olive oil and thyme until each vegetable concentrates into a jewel-bright, silky confit that no longer tastes of individual parts.

Time 120 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 400 g Eggplant (aubergine), cut into 2cm cubes
- ☐ 300 g Zucchini, cut into 2cm half-moons
- ☐ 200 g Red bell pepper, cut into 2cm pieces
- ☐ 400 g Ripe plum tomatoes, roughly chopped
- ☐ 200 g Yellow onion, diced
- ☐ 15 g Garlic cloves, minced
- ☐ 80 ml Extra-virgin olive oil
- ☐ 6 g Fresh thyme sprigs
- ☐ 10 g Fresh basil, torn
- ☐ 8 g Salt and black pepper

Let's make it.

01 Toss the eggplant cubes with 1 teaspoon of salt in a colander. Set over a bowl and let sit for 30 minutes. The salt will draw excess moisture from the eggplant — you will see small beads of liquid form on the surface. After 30 minutes, pat thoroughly dry with paper towels. Dry eggplant roasts; wet eggplant steams. This step is the difference between silky, caramelized eggplant and spongy, pallid cubes.

02 In a large, heavy oven-safe pot or Dutch oven, heat 40ml of the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion and cook for 8 minutes until soft and translucent. Add the garlic and thyme and cook for 1 minute. Add the red pepper and cook for another 5 minutes until beginning to soften. This aromatic base will season the entire ratatouille from within.

03 Add the chopped tomatoes to the pot and cook for 5 minutes to break them down. Add the dried eggplant cubes and zucchini. Drizzle with the remaining 40ml of olive oil, season with salt and pepper. Stir gently to combine. The vegetables should be crowded but just fitting. Bring to a simmer, then transfer to a 160°C (320°F) oven, uncovered. Roast for 60–75 minutes, stirring gently once or twice, until all the vegetables are very soft, their edges are beginning to caramelize, and the liquid has reduced to a concentrated, oily sauce.

04 Remove from the oven and let the ratatouille rest for 10 minutes — it improves significantly as the flavors meld. Tear in the fresh basil and stir gently. Taste for seasoning. Ratatouille is excellent hot, at room temperature, or cold from the refrigerator. It improves the next day as the flavors continue to integrate.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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