

Greek Stuffed Tomatoes (And Stuffed Zucchini)

A popular and traditional Greek dish. Every cook has their own variation on this recipe and not all are vegan. Often, I also stuff green and red peppers as well as eggplant. Eggplant pulp is a delicious addition to the stuffing.



Categories

Gluten-free

Yields: 4 servings

Preparation time: 15 mins

Cooking time: 60 mins

Category: Entrees

Complexity: Moderate

Vegan experience: Absolute beginner

Preparation style: Cooked

Ingredients

Tomato, cooked from fresh	8 large
Zucchini, cooked from fresh	2 medium
Onion, white, yellow or red, raw	1 large
Mushrooms, cooked from fresh	1.5 cup
White rice, uncooked	1 cup
Olive oil	2 teaspoon
Salt, sea salt	0.5 teaspoon
Oregano, ground	1 teaspoon
Basil, ground	1 teaspoon
Mint	1 item
Water	1 cup

Instructions

Choose large ripe tomatoes, like hothouse.

1. Place tomatoes and zucchini in a baking dish that will fit them all while they are not too crowded nor leaving too much empty space.
2. Slice a circle around the tomato stems. It should be big enough to place a spoon inside. Keep the sliced out part and stem in tact as it will be used as a lid for the tomato. Using a spoon carefully scoop out tomato pulp and place in a blender. Scoop out as much as possible without making the skin too thin because then the stuffed tomato will fall apart. Blend tomato innards until no solid pieces remain. Set aside.
3. Wash the zucchini. Cut the zucchinis in half and scoop out pulp leaving enough to keep the integrity of the zucchini skin. Chop the zucchini pulp into small pieces and set aside.
4. Chop the onion and mushrooms (use white or cremini mushrooms) in small pieces. Set aside.

5. Heat olive oil in a large cast iron skillet over med heat. Cook onions until almost translucent, about 3 minutes. Add mushrooms and zucchini pulp. Continue cooking until mushrooms are cooked about 5 - 8 minutes.
6. Add spices to pan, including salt, oregano, basil and 1/2 tsp dried mint. Mix well and cook another 3 minutes. Add one cup rice. Stir and cook for 2 more minutes.
7. Add 1 cup water to tomato pulp and stir. Add the tomato mixture to the rice but leave about 1/2 to 3/4 cup for later. Stir, bring to boil and reduce heat. Cook for about 15 -20 minutes. Until rice is almost done. Add more water if necessary.
8. Heat oven to 350 F. Using a spoon fill tomatoes and zucchini with rice stuffing. Before putting on tomato lids evenly add the remaining tomato pulp and water to the tomatoes and over the zucchini. Put lids on tomatoes. Place tomatoes and zucchini in the pan so they support each other but do not crowd each other. Check the bottom of the pan. There should be at least 1/2 inch of water. Keep an eye on the water at the bottom of the pan while cooking. If all the water evaporates the tomatoes could burn. Add more water as necessary, but not more than 1/2 inch.
9. Place tomatoes and zucchini in the oven and keep an eye on the water level by checking them every 15 minutes. Cook for 60 minutes. Let cool for about half hour before serving. They taste better when allowed to cool. They even taste great cold out of the fridge.