

SPOTLIGHT RECIPE

EGGPLANT-AND-LAMB MOUSSAKA

- Slice the eggplant 1/2-inch to 3/4-inch thick. Place in a single layer in a perforated pan and steam for 10 to 15 minutes until cooked through but still firm. Set aside.
- Toss the whole caps of mushrooms in 1 tablespoon of canola oil and roast in a 350 F oven until cooked through and the liquid is evaporated, about 40 minutes. Grind the mushrooms in a food processor until coarsely chopped. Set aside.
- Heat the remaining canola oil in a pan and sauté the onions until translucent. Add the garlic and spices and toast for 1 minute. Add the ground lamb and cook until slightly browned and crumbly. Add the crushed tomatoes, chopped cooked mushrooms and cinnamon stick. Cover and cook for 20 minutes. Season the filling with salt, freshly ground black pepper and fresh oregano. Cook 10 minutes more, uncovered, to tighten up the sauce.

For the béchamel sauce

- Melt the butter in a saucepan and stir in the flour. Cook, stirring constantly for 5 minutes. Slowly whisk in the low-fat milk and cook until it thickens to heavy-cream texture.
- Whisk the eggs in a separate bowl and temper them: Slowly drizzle the hot, thickened milk into the eggs while constantly stirring to avoid curdling. When there are about 2 cups of milk whisked into the eggs, pour, while whisking, the egg/milk mixture into the pot with the remaining milk. Season the sauce with salt and nutmeg.
- In a hotel pan (24 servings = 2-inch hotel pan) place a layer of eggplant; cut slices to ensure the layer is fully covered. Spread 1/2 of the lamb sauce. Place another layer of eggplant and another layer with the remaining lamb sauce. Spread the béchamel sauce evenly on top and sprinkle with grated cheese.
- Bake uncovered in a 350 F-degree oven for 30 to 45 minutes until the top is golden brown. Cut each full hotel pan into 6-inch-by-8-inch slices, or about 9 ounces each.

Ingredients

Servings: 12

- 2 1/2 pounds fresh eggplant
- 1 pound mushrooms
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 cup onions, diced
- 2 tablespoons garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 pound ground lamb
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 1/2 cups crushed canned tomatoes
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 cup fresh oregano, chopped
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 6 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 3 cups low-fat milk
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 2 tablespoons Pecorino Romano

Side dishes

- Tomato-and-Cucumber Salad
- Roasted Fingerling Potatoes With Oregano

