

126: Imperial Aubergines

Ratatouille, Spinach and Goat Cheese Omelet

Cara Benson, Toast/Tartine

- 1 small or 1/2 medium eggplant, peeled
- 1 squash
- 1 zucchini
- 1 medium yellow onion
- 4 whole garlic cloves
- 1 teaspoon cayenne
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 12-ounce jar of prepared roasted red peppers, diced (about 1 to 1 1/2 roasted peppers)
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1/2 cup red wine
- 1 cup water
- 2 tomatoes, diced
- 1/2 cup fresh basil, chiffonade
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Dice the vegetables into 1/2-inch pieces. Keep the squash and zucchini together and keep the onion and garlic together. Keep the eggplant separate.

In a bowl, combine the cayenne, paprika, oregano, garlic powder and onion powder. Sprinkle the vegetables with the seasoning mixture. Reserve the remaining seasoning mixture.

Place the groups of vegetables on a baking sheet and roast in the oven. Roasting times vary for the vegetables. Roast the eggplant for 20 minutes. Roast the squash and zucchini for 15 to 20 minutes. Roast the onion and garlic until the garlic is brown, about 35 to 40 minutes. Heat a large pan until hot on the stove. Add the roasted vegetables and the red peppers to the pan and cook on high for 3

minutes, then stir in the tomato paste. Cook another 2 minutes then add the wine. Scrape the bottom and corners of pan to prevent burning. Stir in the water and taste the ratatouille. Adjust the seasoning to taste with the reserved seasoning mixture, salt and pepper. Turn the heat down to medium and cook for several minutes, stirring regularly. With the heat on low, stir in the tomatoes and basil. Remove from the heat and refrigerate until cool. The ratatouille will keep in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

Omelet assembly

5 ounces fresh spinach

1 tablespoon canola oil

3 eggs

2 tablespoons butter, plus extra softened butter

2 to 3 tablespoons crumbled goat cheese

1 cup ratatouille

Salt

Sauté the spinach in the canola oil until wilted. Season with salt, then set aside.

Mix 3 eggs in a blender until smooth, without incorporating any air. Heat a sauté pan over medium heat and add the butter. When the butter is hot, add the eggs with a pinch of salt and scramble vigorously. While the eggs are still wet, smooth them out evenly to cover the bottom of the pan. Add the ratatouille, sautéed spinach, and goat cheese. Place the pan in a 350 degree oven for a minute to heat through. Roll the omelet onto a plate and smear with softened butter. Serve with fresh fruit and multigrain toast.

Makes 1 omelet.