

Gemista

Ingredients

- 8(2) tomatoes
- 4(1) green bell peppers
- 1-2(1) aubergines
- 5-6(2) potatoes, cut into wedges
- 2(½) red onions, finely chopped
- 2(1) cloves of garlic, finely chopped
- 1(½) courgette, chopped
- 500g(125g)/18oz. rice (for risotto)
- 1(¼) tin chopped tomatoes
- a small bunch of parsley, chopped
- a small bunch of fresh mint, chopped
- 2(½) tbsps tomato puree
- 2(½) tsps sugar
- 2(½) tbsps of butter
- salt and freshly ground pepper
- olive oil
- 250g(100g)/8.8oz beef mince (optional)



Method

1. To prepare this delicious Greek stuffed tomatoes recipe, start by washing thoroughly your vegetables. Slice off the top of the peppers and remove the seeds and white parts from the inside. Slice off the top of the tomatoes; using a spoon remove the flesh of the tomatoes and keep it in a bowl. (The flesh of the tomatoes will be the base for the tomato sauce for the Gemista.). Try to leave the vegetables as thin as possible, leaving just a little of the flesh, but be careful not to poke through their skin. Place the empty vegetables on a baking tray and season with a pinch of salt and sugar and add a little butter on the bottom of each one.
2. Peel the aubergines and cut the flesh into small cubes and set aside, as you will use them later for the filling of the Gemista. Chop the garlic and add it to the aubergines. Chop the courgette in small cubes and set aside (not in the same receptacle). Chop the mint and parsley and set aside. Finally, chop the onion and, if using, add it to the mince beef.
3. **Prepare the sauce.** In a blender add the flesh of the tomatoes, 5-6 tbsps olive oil, the tomato puree, and sugar, season with salt and pepper and mix to combine. Set aside.
4. **Prepare the filling.** Prepare the tinned tomatoes, then in a saucepan add some olive oil and sauté the beef and onions, until the beef juices have been absorbed and the onion is translucent.
5. Add the courgette and sauté for one more minute then add the flesh of the aubergines and the garlic and sauté, until softened.
6. Add the rice and continue sautéing, until it becomes translucent. Pour in the chopped tomatoes and season with salt and pepper. As soon as the liquid has been absorbed, the stuffing is ready.
7. Remove the pan from the stove and stir in the fresh herbs.
8. **Cooking the Gemista.** Spoon the filling inside the empty vegetables and place the potatoes, cut into pieces, in between the vegetables. Season with salt and pepper and pour the tomato juice (sauce) over the vegetables and in the baking tray. Cover the vegetables with their lids and add 2-3 glasses of water.
9. Cover the Gemista with aluminium foil and bake in preheated oven at 180 degrees for 60-75 minutes. After 35 minutes remove the aluminium foil and bake, until nicely coloured.

Notes

Serves 8-10 people.