Beef-Eggplant Combo, Italian Style

Serves 6

Ingredients

Base Recipe

- 1 1/2 lbs ground beef
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 can (1 lb) tomatoes, cut up
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1/8 tsp pepper
- 1 eggplant (1 lb), peeled and cubed (approximately 4 1/2 cups)
- 1 cup water (reduce to 3/4 cup for microwave method)
- 1 cup quick-cooking rice
- 1/2 cup shredded Mozzarella cheese

Method 1 - Range Top

1. Cook ground beef, onion, and garlic in a large skillet over medium heat until beef is browned - approximately 10 minutes. Drain excess fat.
2. Stir in tomatoes, salt, oregano, pepper, eggplant, and water.
3. Bring to a boil and stir in rice.
4. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer 25 minutes or until eggplant and rice are tender, stirring occasionally.
5. Sprinkle Mozzarella over the top.
6. Cover and cook until cheese is melted - 3 to 5 minutes.

Method 2 - Electric Skillet

1. Heat electric skillet to 350°F.
2. Add ground beef, onion, and garlic; cook until beef is browned - approximately 5 minutes. Drain excess fat.
3. Stir in tomatoes, salt, oregano, pepper, eggplant, and water.
4. Bring to a boil and stir in rice.
5. Reduce heat to simmer setting (220°F). Cover with vent closed and cook until eggplant and rice are tender - approximately 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
6. Sprinkle Mozzarella over the top.
7. Cover and cook until cheese is melted - 3 to 5 minutes.

Method 3 - Microwave

Reduce water to 3/4 cup for this method.

1. Crumble ground beef into a 3-quart glass casserole. Stir in onion and garlic.
2. Microwave on high, covered, until meat is cooked - approximately 8 minutes, stirring every 2 minutes to break up beef. Drain excess fat.
3. Add tomatoes, 3/4 cup water, salt, oregano, and pepper.
4. Microwave covered 10 to 12 minutes or until boiling.
5. Stir in eggplant and rice.
6. Microwave covered until eggplant and rice are tender - approximately 15 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes.
7. Sprinkle Mozzarella over the top.
8. Microwave until cheese is melted - 1 to 2 minutes.
9. Let stand covered 5 minutes before serving.

BEEF-EGGPLANT COMBO, ITALIAN STYLE

(Basic Recipe — Makes 6 servings)

1½ pounds ground beef

1 cup chopped onion
1 garlic clove, minced
1 (1-pound) can tomatoes, cut up
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves
⅛ teaspoon pepper
1 (!-pound) eggplant, peeled and cubed (about 4½ cups)
1 cup water
1 cup quick-cooking rice
½ cup shredded Mozzarella cheese

RANGE TOP METHOD: Cook beef, onion and garlic in a large skillet until beef is browned, about 10 minutes. Drain off excess fat. Stir in tomatoes, salt, oregano, pepper, eggplanf and water. Bring to boiling and stir in rice. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, 25 minutes or until eggplant and rice are tender. Stir occasionally. Sprinkle with cheese. Cover and continue cooking until cheese is melted, 3 to 5 minutes.

ELECTRIC SKILLET METHOD: Use ingredients listed in basic recipe. Heat skillet to 350 degrees. Add beef, onion and garlic and cook until beef is browned, about 5 minutes. Drain off excess fat. Stir in tomatoes, salt, oregano, pepper, eggplant and water. Bring to boiling and add rice. Reduce heat to simmer, 220 degrees. Simmer, covered, with vent closed, until eggplant and rice are tender, about 30 minutes. Stir occasionally. Sprinkle with

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cheese. Cover and continue to cook until cheese is melted, 3 to 5 minutes.

MICROWAVE OVEN METHOD: Use ingredients listed in basic recipe, but decrease water from 1 to ¾ cup. Crumble ground beef into 3-quart glass casserole. Stir in onion and garlic. Microwave on high, covered, until meat is cooked, about 8 minutes. Stir every 2 minutes to break up ground beef. Add tomatoes, ¾ cup water, salt, oregano and pepper.

Microwawe, covered, 10 to 12 minutes or until boiling. Stir in eggplant and rice. Microwave, covered, until eggplant and rice are tender, about 15 minutes. Stir every 5 minutes. Sprinkle with cheese. Return to oven and microwave until cheese is melted, 1 to 2 minutes. Let stand, covered, 5 minutes before serving.

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