

Renee's Eggplant Parmesan Casserole (Gluten & Dairy Free)

From – Renee Steffensmeier

40 oz of favorite tomato pasta sauce (homemade or store bought)
1 lb lean ground beef (optional)
sliced mushrooms (optional)
2 medium/large eggplants ($\frac{3}{4}$ lb each), trimmed, sliced into $\frac{1}{2}$ " rounds
3 Tbsp EVO
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup rice bread crumbs
Dried seasonings (Italian blend or oregano and basil)
salt & ground pepper
8 oz vegan gourmet mozzarella cheese, grated (divided)

- Saute mushrooms until brown. Remove.
- Brown ground beef.
- Add tomato sauce and mushrooms.
- Simmer for 10 minutes to blend flavors.
- Use large deep roaster or casserole dish
- Cover bottom of pan with $\frac{1}{3}$ of sauce mixture.
- Lay slices of eggplant on sauce.
- Drizzle with $1 \frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp of EVO.
- Sprinkle with 2 Tbsp crumbs and seasonings mixture.
- Add $\frac{1}{3}$ of sauce mixture.
- Spread $\frac{1}{2}$ of cheese.
- Add another layer of eggplant slices, EVO, crumbs, sauce and ending with cheese.
- Cover with foil
- Bake 40 to 50 minutes, until tender and bubbling.
- Uncover and bake further if thicker consistency is desired. Lower heat and check often.
- Let rest 15 minutes or more before serving.



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