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## Ratatouille

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*This wonderful Ratatouille recipe by Jenn Segal is both healthy and delicious! Ratatouille is a bright and chunky summer year-around vegetable stew or side dish.*

*Compliments from Cindy Neel, providing the perfect ingredients for your real estate needs!*

### Ingredients

1 large (1.25lb) eggplant, cut into 1/3-inch cubes  
Salt  
6 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus more for serving if wanted  
2 medium zucchini (about 1 lb), cut into 1/3-inch cubes  
1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped  
5 large cloves garlic, chopped. I use garlic in a tube.  
1 red, orange or yellow bell pepper, cut into 1/4 -inch dice  
5 large vine-ripened tomatoes (1.75lb), cut into 1/3-inch cubes with their juices  
1 tablespoon tomato paste  
2 teaspoons fresh chopped thyme, plus more for serving  
¾ teaspoon sugar  
¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)  
3 tablespoons chopped fresh basil



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## **Directions**

Heat 3 tablespoons of oil in a large nonstick pan over medium heat. Add the eggplant and season with  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt. Cook, stirring frequently, until soft and starting to brown, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer to a plate and set aside.

Add another tablespoon of oil to the pan (no need to clean it). Add the zucchini and cook, stirring frequently, until tender-crisp, 3 to 4 minutes. Season with  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt and transfer to a plate; set aside.

Add two more tablespoons of oil to the pan and add the onion and bell pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, for about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and continue cooking for about 3 minutes more. Do not brown. Add the tomatoes and their juices, tomato paste, thyme, sugar, crushed red pepper flakes (if using) and  $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the tomatoes are broken down into a sauce, 8 to 10 minutes.

Add the cooked eggplant to the pan; bring to a gentle boil, then reduce the heat to low, and simmer, uncovered, for about 10 minutes or until the eggplant is soft. Add the zucchini and cook for 1 to 2 minutes more or until just warmed through. Taste and adjust seasoning, if necessary. Sprinkle with fresh basil and thyme, drizzle with a little olive oil if desired, and serve warm or chilled.

Leftovers can be stored in the refrigerator in an airtight container for up to 5 days.