

Thai Eggplant



3090 – PLU

Description/Taste

Thai eggplants can have an elongated, cylindrical shape to a small, globular shape, averaging 2-3 centimeters in diameter. The outer skin is smooth and glossy and ranges from dark green, light green, to white. The vivid green hues begin at the fruit's stem and then fade to a creamy white in a striping pattern. The inner flesh is pale green to white and contains many small, brown, edible seeds. Thai eggplants are crunchy and mild with a slightly bitter taste.

Current Facts

Thai eggplants, botanically classified as *Solanum melongena*, are members of the Solanaceae, or nightshade family, along with potatoes, tomatoes, and peppers. Also known as Round eggplant, Makua pot, and Ma keua praw, Thai eggplants are the given name to many eggplant cultivars of all sizes, shapes, and colors. Thai eggplant varieties are known for containing some of the smallest cultivated eggplant varieties in the marketplace and the most common varieties found are Petch Siam, Tiger hybrid, Green Doll, and the Kermit hybrid.

Nutritional Value

Thai eggplants contain dietary fiber, potassium, manganese, and antioxidants.

Applications

Thai eggplants can be consumed in both raw and cooked applications such as grilling, frying, baking, pureeing, stewing, stuffing, and pickling. This eggplant is unique because unlike other eggplant varieties that require cooking, it can be used in raw preparations, such as salads and crudité. The seeds are edible but can be difficult to chew. In cooked applications, Thai eggplants are most commonly used in curries, and when cooked they become soft and soak up the sauce with ease. They can also be sliced and added to stir-fries or battered and fried into a tempura side dish. Thai eggplant pairs well with aromatics such as garlic, ginger, and onions, herbs such as basil, oregano, cilantro and parsley, nightshade family members including tomatoes, potatoes, and peppers, as well as coconut milk, soy sauce, shellfish, and poultry. Thai eggplants will keep up to three days when stored in a cool and dry place.

Miso Beef Stuffed Eggplant "Pumpkins"

Perfect for Halloween hors d'oeuvres.

Prep Time: 30 mins
Cook Time: 30 mins
Total Time: 60 mins

Course: Appetizer
Cuisine: Japanese

Servings: 3-4
Author: Chubbypanda.com

Ingredients:

12 round Thai eggplants
1/2 lbs of thin-sliced, shabu-shabu style beef (at least 12 slices)
1 medium yellow onion
1 tbsp of red miso paste
2 tbsp of sugar
1 cup of bonito broth
1/2 cup of rice wine
1 tbsp of vegetable oil (preferably rice bran)
2 tsp of sesame seeds
Sea salt to taste



Instructions:

- Carefully separate and roll each slice of beef into a tight bundle.
- Clean and finely mince the onion.
- Trim the stem of each eggplant to about 2 cm. Level out the base of the eggplant so it stands freely on its own without wobbling. Remove the cap and stem in one piece, then hollow out the eggplant with the teaspoon. Leave at least half a centimeter. Rub a little salt on the inside and let sit with an hour, then pour out any liquid. Discard the liquid. Finely mince the innards. Retain both the innards and the caps.
- Preheat your oven to 350°F. Lightly brush the bottom and inside of each eggplant with vegetable oil and place on the sheet pan. Brush the cut end of each cap and place on the sheet pan. Roast the eggplants for 10-15 minutes until just soft. Set aside to cool.
- Add the remainder of the vegetable oil to the frying pan. Over medium-high heat, brown the beef rolls. Remove the beef from the pan and set aside.
- Drop the meat to medium. Add the sesame seeds and toast until fragrant, then add the onions and eggplant innards. Cook until caramelized and volume has been reduced by half. Stir frequently to avoid burning.
- Dissolve the red miso in the bonito stock and mix until fully incorporated. Add the beef, any drippings, miso mixture, sugar, and rice wine to the pan and bring to a boil. Drop to medium heat and simmer until the sauce has thickened and reduced to a thick paste.
- Spoon a little bit of the sauce into the bottom of each eggplant. Coil each beef roll into a pinwheel shape and gently insert one roll into each eggplant. Top with more sauce and the cap.
- These Miso Beef Stuffed Eggplant "Pumpkins" are great at room temperature and can easily be made several hours in advance. Please try them for your next Halloween party.