



LA FAMIGLIA

GRANDMA'S EGGPLANT CASSEROLE

My mom calls this dish Italian soul food. As small children this was one dish that had the name “casserole” attached to it and didn't make us cringe! Grandma always made more than one of these at a time to make sure that we would have left-overs to take home. She didn't have a micro wave way back when and would certainly marvel at how easily we can now reheat this dish, and other mouthwatering left-overs.

INGRIDIENTS

- 1 large eggplant
- 3 to 4 medium size tomatoes
- 1 cup shredded Swiss cheese
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup butter (cut into small pieces)
- ½ cup tomato sauce blended with ¼ cup La Famiglia Barbera
- 1 cup seasoned bread crumbs

DIRECTIONS

Cut eggplant into ¼ inch slices and soak in a bowl of salted cold water for 30 minutes. Peel tomatoes (this was Grandma's original way; I've had good success not peeling the tomatoes) and cut into ¼ slices. Drain eggplant and rinse with cold water. Grease bottom and sides of a 12x9 inch baking dish with butter or olive oil. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Place 1/3 of the eggplant slices in dish; top with half of the tomato slices and sprinkle with ½ of the Swiss cheese and then with 1/3 of the Parmesan cheese. Repeat this procedure ending up with a top layer of eggplant. Dot the top with the small pieces of butter and pour the tomato sauce / Barbera mixture over the top. Cover all of this with the bread crumbs and sprinkle with the remaining 1/3 cup of Parmesan cheese.

OPTIONAL:

Make bread crumbs from thick sour dough French bread which were sautéed and crisped in a pan, in olive oil, capers and garlic. (If you love garlic this is a winner!)

Bake 1 hour. Let stand for 15 minutes before cutting. Serves 4-6. Serve with La Famiglia 2005 Snows Lake Vineyard Barbera.