

Moussaka

Source: Bob and Robin Young **Servings:** 12 **Total Time:** abt 2 hours

Tip: build the moussaka ahead of time! The next day, let sit at room temperature for 30 minutes and bake as instructed.

This classic Greek dish is perfect for a family affair! Original recipe by Chef Michael Symon, *The Chew*

Ingredients: Lamb

1/4 c dried Currants

1/4 c Extra-Virgin Olive Oil, divided

1 lbs Ground Lamb

1/2 t Ground Cinnamon

1/2 t Ground Ginger

1/4 t Ground Allspice

1 lg Onion, peeled and thinly sliced on mandolin

5 lg cloves Garlic, peeled and finely chopped

2 T Tomato Paste

2 c Red Wine

1 can Plum Tomatoes, 28 ounces, pureed until smooth with their juices

Sea Salt and freshly ground Black Pepper, to taste

Ingredients: Eggplant

1 1/2 c Vegetable Oil

1 1/2 lbs Eggplant, cut crosswise into 14 thick slices

Sea Salt and freshly ground Black Pepper, to taste

Ingredients: Béchamel

6 T unsalted Butter

1/2 c All-Purpose Flour

2 1/2 c Whole Milk

2 Bay Leaf

1/8 t freshly grated fresh Nutmeg

3 Egg Yolks

1/2 c Pecorino Romano or Graviere cheese, grated, plus extra for garnish

1 Lemon juiced and zested

1/4 c Italian Parsley, chopped, plus more for garnish

2 T fresh Oregano, chopped

Directions - For the Lamb

In a small bowl, add the currants and cover with warm water. Allow to soak for 30 minutes. Drain.

In a medium saucepan add 1 tablespoon olive oil and heat over medium-high heat. Add the lamb, cinnamon, ginger, allspice, Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper. Cook, breaking up the meat with the back of the spoon, until browned, about 5 minutes. Transfer the lamb to a strainer set over a large bowl and allow to drain.

Return the pan to medium-high heat and add 3 tablespoons olive oil. Add onions and bell pepper and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and tomato paste and cook an additional minute.

Return the lamb to the pan, add wine, tomato puree and currants and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer until thickened, about 30 minutes. Season with Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Directions - Eggplant

In a large skillet add canola oil and heat over medium-high heat. Season the eggplant with Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper. Add the eggplant slices and fry until golden brown on both sides, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate.

Directions - Béchamel

In a medium saucepan add butter and place over medium heat. Add flour and cook, whisking constantly, until pale and smooth, about 2 minutes. Add the milk and bay leaf and cook until thickened, whisking constantly. Season with Kosher salt, freshly ground black pepper and nutmeg and discard the bay leaf. Allow the sauce to cool for 5 minutes.

In a small bowl, add the egg yolks, cheeses, parsley, oregano, and lemon zest and whisk into the béchamel sauce until smooth.

Directions - Assemble

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Butter a 3-quart baking or casserole dish. Place half of the eggplant slices in the dish and cover with half of the meat sauce. Top with the remaining eggplant slices and then the remaining meat sauce. Pour the béchamel over the top and spread evenly. Sprinkle with remaining Graviere cheese, place dish on sheet tray. Bake until browned and bubbly, about 45-50 minutes. Top with more chopped parsley. Allow to cool for 20 minutes before serving.