

Eggplant Involtni

December 18th, 2021

This recipe serves: 6

Prep Time: 00:30

Cook Time: 00:45

"Involtni" (plural for Involtno) are small, bite-sized (usually) appetizers, with an outer layer and some sort of filling. Involtni could include Armadillo Eggs, to mini-Pizza Rolls, to bite-sized Twinkies. Eggplant Involtni makes a nice addition to a Beef Roast, Pork Roast, or Grilled Chicken. This recipe specifies canned whole tomatoes. Canned diced tomatoes usually contain preservatives that prevent the tomatoes from breaking down into a nice sauce. Canned whole tomatoes, on the other hand, will break down better when simmered and provide a smoother, thicker sauce.

Ingredients:

1 Large (1.5 pound) Italian Eggplant, peeled
6 Tablespoons Vegetable Oil
Sea Salt

Filling:

6 Ounces Ricotta
1.5 Ounces Pecorino Romano Cheese, grated
2 Slices of White Rustic Bread, pulsed in a food processor to achieve a rough crumb
1/4 Teaspoon Garlic Powder
1/2 Teaspoon Dried Oregano
4 Tablespoons Fresh Basil, chopped
1 Tablespoon Lemon Juice

Sauce:

28 Ounces Whole Canned Tomatoes, blended
1 Ounce Baby Bella Mushrooms, sliced
1 Splash Fish Sauce
1 Tablespoon Capers, rinsed
2 Cloves (1 Teaspoon) Garlic, finely minced or 1/4 Teaspoon Garlic Powder
1 Teaspoon Red Pepper Flakes (optional)

Directions:

Peel the Eggplant, then cut it lengthwise into 6 slices, each about 1/2 inch thick slices. Ensure that each is trimmed so that it will lay flat on either side.

In the oven, set 1 rack to the lower-middle position and the second rack about 8 inches from broiler element.

Preheat oven to 375° Fahrenheit.

Line a large sheet pan with lightly oiled parchment paper or aluminum foil.

Arrange the Eggplant slices in single layer on the prepared sheet pan.

Brush 1 side of Eggplant slices with 1 Tablespoon Oil and sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon Salt.

Turn over each Eggplant slice. Brush with 1 Tablespoon Oil and sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon Salt.

Load the sheet pan into the lower oven shelf and **bake for 15 minutes.**

Move the sheet pan to the upper shelf and **bake for another 15 minutes.**

Each Eggplant slice should be tender and lightly browned.

Remove from the oven and let the Eggplant slices cool for about 5 minutes.

Carefully turn over each Eggplant slice.

Set a 12-inch broiler-safe skillet over a medium-low heat stovetop. Add 1 Tablespoon Oil and heat until the Oil begins to shimmer.

Add Garlic, Oregano, Pepper Flakes, and 1/2 teaspoon Salt.

Cook, stirring constantly, for about 30 seconds.
Stir in Tomatoes, along with the reserved Tomato Juice.

Increase the heat to high until the sauce begins to simmer.
Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer about 15 minutes. The sauce should begin to thicken.

Lid the mixture and remove from heat to rest.

Tear the Bread slice into about 8 pieces, then drop the pieces into a blender or food processor. Pulse the Bread about 12 times, until it is ground into Bread Crumbs.

In a medium bowl, mix the Filling ingredients until fully integrated.

Place a scoop of the Ricotta mixture on the bottom third of each of the 12 Eggplant Slices, ensuring an equal distribution across the 12 Slices.

Gently roll each Eggplant Slice, with the Ricotta inside, and place them seam side down, in Tomato Sauce.

Simmer the Skillet over medium heat for another 5 minutes.

Transfer skillet to the oven and **broil about 8 minutes**
, until the Eggplant is well browned and the cheese is heated through.

Sprinkle with remaining 1/4 cup Pecorino and rest for 5 minutes.
Sprinkle with the remaining Basil and serve.