

Easy Eggplant and Zucchini Casserole

Peel the eggplants, if desired (this makes the casserole easier to cut). Cut into 1/4-inch slices. Pre-cook the slices until they are partially dehydrated. Bake at 450 F until slices are shriveled but not brown or crispy.

Remove immediately from baking sheet and place on a plate.

Prepare the bean filling by placing all “creamy bean filling” ingredients into a food processor and processing until smooth.

Preheat oven to 425. Spray a mid-sized rectangular casserole dish (I used 11x7-inch) with canola oil or non-stick spray. Put a thin layer of sauce in the bottom of the dish—just barely enough to cover the bottom. Arrange 1/3 of the eggplant slices over the sauce. Spread 1/2 of the bean filling over the eggplant, and put half of the zucchini or other vegetables over the filling. Drizzle lightly with sauce. Repeat eggplant, filling, zucchini, and sauce. Place the final layer of eggplant over the top, and pour the remaining sauce evenly over it, spreading it to cover the eggplant completely.

Bake uncovered for about 30 minutes. Check to make sure that zucchini is cooked and sauce has thickened; if not, add more time. Remove when done and allow to sit for a few minutes before serving. Sprinkle with chopped parsley for garnish.

Makes 6 servings. Per serving: 172 Calories (kcal); 1g Total Fat; (5% calories from fat); 10g Protein; 35g Carbohydrate; 0mg Cholesterol; 424mg Sodium; 10g Fiber. Weight Watchers Core/3 Points. Adapted from fatfreevegan.com

Zucchini is a backyard garden staple. What's not to love? It is super easy to grow, packed with nutrition and has a mild flavor that is agreeable to even the pickiest eaters.

- Zucchini is low in calories. One medium-sized squash (yes, an entire zucchini) has only 33 calories. It's so packed with hydrating water and filling fiber, zucchini is a highly satiating food.
- Zucchini is a good source of Vitamins A and C, potassium, folate and manganese- Perfect post-workout nutrition.
- Are you suffering from wonky digestion (i.e. constipation and bloating) after indulging in too much summer weekend fun? Adding some raw zucchini to your diet may help ease your distress. Zucchini acts as a potent digestive tonic. Its high fiber and water content will get things flowing without the irritation or gas that other high fiber foods may induce. I have been throwing a large piece of zucchini in my mid-day smoothie (a strong blender is important here). It is virtually tasteless, provides a good nutrition boost and helps keeps me satisfied for hours.

Zucchini has a reputation as an “overwhelming producer.” (Any backyard gardener can attest to this.) It is late July in New England and usually the time when we start wondering, “What am I going to do with all these gosh darn zucchini???”

- **Eat it Raw**— chopped in salads, blended into smoothies or dipped in hummus.
Pair zucchini with eggs. Scrambles, omelets and frittatas all lend themselves well to our favorite green squash.
- Add chopped zucchini to a stir-fry, **chili** or **soup**
- Have you tried **Zoodles**???
- Stuff and bake your zucchini