



RECIPE OF THE WEEK: 27/09/2021

Melitzanosalata (Aubergine Dip)

This is a recipe for a simple but delicious smoky aubergine dip which would tantalise your taste buds. This dip can be served accompanying savoury dishes such as fish, meat, on its own as first course or as part of a meze platter. It is a delicious appetizer served with warm pita or crusty bread. The important steps for a perfect melitzanosalata is to use fresh aubergines which have to be chargrilled or cooked on an open gas fire to give better results. An alternative method is to bake them in a pre-heated oven. No herbs or spices normally used to in the recipe. It is simply prepared until it is light and smoky some people mix it with walnuts, feta cheese, yoghurt or mayonnaise. This is a simpler recipe and it is exceptionally tasty as the extra-virgin olive oil combines with the smoky flesh, vinegar, lemon juice and minced garlic.

4 Portions

Ingredients

4 large aubergines
½ onion, grated 1 garlic clove, minced
75ml extra-virgin oil and some extra for drizzling
2 tbsp white wine vinegar
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
a small bunch of fresh flat- leaf parsley finely chopped and a few extra leaves to decorate
4 black olives for decoration



Method

1. Wash and pat dry the aubergines with kitchen paper.
2. Prick the surface of the aubergines with a fork to let the steam escape when baking.
3. Smoke them on a strong gas flame of a stove for 25-30 minutes turning them every 10 minutes until the skin is charred, the flesh is soft and has a smoky flavour.
An alternative method is to chargrill them for 30-40 minutes until you achieve the same results. Another way is to place the aubergines on a foil -lined baking sheet and bake in a pre-heated oven at 180 °C / 160 °C fan/ gas 4 for 50-55 minutes until soft.
4. Leave the aubergines to cool slightly for 10 minutes before handling. Cut them in half lengthwise with a knife and using a spoon, scoop out the flesh. Place the flesh in a colander to remove its juices which may be bitter. Another way is to rinse the baked aubergines under cold water and carefully remove the charred skin with your hands. Squeeze the flesh to remove its juices.
5. Finely chop the aubergine flesh with a knife and place in a bowl. This way, you have a courser consistency. You may blend in a food processor for a few seconds but you will have a smoother texture.
6. Add the minced grated onion in the bowl, minced garlic, extra-virgin olive oil, lemon juice, vinegar, and seasoning. Stir well with a spoon to mix all the ingredients together.
7. Garnish with fresh flat-leaf parsley, olives and drizzle with olive oil.
8. Serve as a starter with warm pita bread or as part of a meze platter.