

Layered Eggplant Casserole



Serves about 5-6

Ingredients

Casserole

- 2 medium sized eggplants
- 1 red bell pepper
- 1 14-ounce can artichoke hearts (in water, not oil)
- 1 1-pound bag frozen, chopped spinach
- 1 medium onion
- 1 bunch fresh basil (small clamshell sized package)
- 1 32-ounce jar tomato sauce (I like Rao's), or homemade

Walnut Parmesan for topping

- 1 cup walnuts
- 1/3 cup nutritional yeast
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

Lightly oil a 10" x 13" x 2" pan, set aside. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Prepare ingredients to layer.

Slice the eggplant very thin, using a 2mm slicing disc (Cuisinart) or by hand on a mandolin. Roast the bell pepper until skin is charred. Allow to cool, then carefully peel off skin, remove seeds and slice into strips.

Drain artichoke hearts, slice in the food processor with the 2mm disc or thinly slice by hand or on mandolin. Thaw spinach and place in fine mesh strainer. Squeeze out moisture by pressing spinach with a wood spoon against the sides of the strainer.

Slice onion thinly with the 2mm food processor disc or by hand or mandolin. Caramelize onion by sautéing with a bit of oil on medium heat. Add water if onion becomes dry. Keep cooking until golden. This could take up to 15 minutes.

Wash basil and pat dry. Slice into thin strips.

Assemble the casserole. Start with a layer of tomato sauce. Spread over the bottom of the pan to cover. Next layer the eggplant slices, overlapping to completely cover the pan. Top this layer with the onions and red peppers, being careful to completely cover. Repeat the layer of eggplant, followed by a thin layer of the sauce. Spread the spinach and artichokes over to create the next layer. Top with another layer of eggplant followed by the sauce.

Make the walnut mixture and sprinkle over the top of the casserole. Bake for 45 minutes, until a fork goes in easily.

Can be made ahead and frozen.