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by Liz Robb

Creamy and Delicious Moussaka



Ingredients

3 aubergines
Olive oil
2 onions
2 fat cloves of garlic
500g minced lamb
8 tablespoons of passata
1 heaped tablespoon of tomato puree
80 ml of beef stock
1 teaspoon of ground cinnamon
Half a teaspoon of allspice
Half a teaspoon of dried oregano
A large handful of fresh parsley
Salt and freshly milled black pepper
75g butter
75g plain flour
500ml semi-skimmed milk
75g mature cheddar cheese
Fresh nutmeg
2 eggs
25g pecorino cheese

Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 200 degrees, 180 degrees fan oven. Lightly grease two large baking sheets with olive oil.
2. Slice the aubergines to about 1 cm in thickness, then place them all in a colander and sprinkle with salt, cover with a plate and add some weight. Leave for 30 minutes then rinse off the salt and blot dry on kitchen towel. Next, place the slices on the prepared trays, drizzle over a little more olive oil and bake in the oven for about 20 minutes. Take out of the oven and cover to keep warm once cooked.
3. While the aubergine is baking, peel and chop the onions and cook gently over a low heat in a tablespoon of olive oil for 5 minutes. Add the peeled and crushed garlic and

cook for a further minute or two. Add the minced lamb, break up any clumps by stirring, and cook until it has browned. Turn off the heat, push the lamb to one side and spoon out and discard any excess oil.

- 4 3. Return the lamb to the heat and add the passata, tomato puree and red wine [or beef stock], stirring the liquids in well. Then sprinkle in the cinnamon, allspice, oregano and parsley, finely chopped, and season with salt and black pepper. Turn down to a gentle simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, for 15-20 minutes. Adjust the amount of liquid if it dries out too much.
- 5 4. To make the moussaka topping, cut the butter into pieces and melt in a saucepan over a low heat, then gradually add the flour and stir to make a thick paste. Drop in a little milk and whisk briskly until smooth, then repeat until all the milk is whisked in to make the sauce. Grate the cheddar and stir into the sauce until it has melted, then add a good grating of nutmeg and season to taste. Break the eggs into a small bowl, whisk, then add to the sauce and stir in well. Turn off the heat.
- 6 5. Now layer the moussaka. Put a third of the aubergine slices on the bottom of the dish, cover with half of the lamb mixture, then a third of the aubergine slices, then the remainder of the lamb mixture, with a final layer of aubergine on the top. Pour on the topping and grate the pecorino cheese on top, then bake for 50 to 60 minutes, until the topping is cooked and golden brown. Leave for a minute or two before serving to allow it to firm up.
- 7 - Lamb is the meat traditionally used for this dish, it goes so well with the cinnamon and allspice, but you can use minced beef instead if you prefer.
- 8 - For a vegetarian alternative, replace the meat with minced quorn.
- 9 - If you don't like aubergines, try using thinly sliced potato instead, or possibly courgettes.

Cooks Note
