Eggplant Parmesan   
  
Categories:   
  
  
Ingredients  
  
 2 Tbsp butter  
1 c chopped onion  
1 clove garlic, mashed  
1 lb ground chuck  
3 cans tomato sauce (8 oz)  
2 tsp dried oregano leaves  
1 tsp dried basil leaves  
1/2 tsp anise seed  
1 eggplant (1.25 lb)  
2 eggs, slightly beaten  
1 1/2 c dried bread crumbs  
1/2 c grated Parmesan cheese  
1/2 c vegetable or olive oil  
1 package mozzarella cheese, sliced  
  
  
Directions  
  
In a skillet melt butter. Sauté onions, garlic and meat for about 5 minutes. Add tomato sauce, oregano, basil and anise. Mix well and set aside  
Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease 12x8x2 baking dish  
Wash eggplant, slice crosswise 1/2" thick  
In a pie plate, combine eggs and 1 tablespoon water, mix well. In another pie plate combine bread crumbs with 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, mix well  
Dip eggplant slices into egg mixture, coating well. Then dip into crumb mixture, coating evenly  
Saute eggplant slices in a little hot oil or until golden brown and crisp on both sides. Add more oil if needed  
Place a single layer of eggplant into bottom of prepared baking dish. Sprinkle with some of the remaining Parmesan cheese, top with a few slices of mozzarella cheese, cover with tomato sauce. Repeat layering until all ingredients used, making sure to cover the top completely with mozzarella cheese  
Bake uncovered for 20 minutes or until cheese is melted and bubbles

Hints

Select eggplants that are relatively heavy for their size, with skins that are smooth, taut, and shiny. Tan patches, scars, or bruises on the skin are signs of decay underneath. When you press an eggplant with your thumb, it should feel firm and bounce back. The fuzzy caps and stems should be green and free of decay and mold. Eggplants are perishable,  buy them no more than a day or two in advance and store them in a plastic bag in a cool place.   
  
When ready to use, slice the eggplants, set on a paper towel and then lightly salt the rounds and leave on about  20  minutes before wiping off the salt. This will remove some of the water in the eggplants, and they will absorb less oil during cooking. It also takes away the bitterness of the eggplant.

When I made it  I used 3 small eggplants (about .8 lb each).  I used  1.3 lbs of grd beef and I used a 13 x9x2 cake pan and put in 3 layers.  The fresh mozzarella was great on the top and probable world be good through out.  I used plan bread crumbs but next time  I make it I think I would like to try mixing Italain and panko, . I cooked it longer closer to  30 minutes.

I think if you cut the recipe in half you could put it in a 8x8 pan or a deep dish pie plate.  If you have extra eggplant bread it  and fry it you can freeze it like that.

Hope this helps!  If you have any questions call or e-mail me and if you make let me know how it turns out!

Great to see everyone, it was fun!