



From the Kitchen of Executive Chef Jessica VanRoo

Roasted Garlic Ratatouille

Serves 4

184 calories per serving

Description from Living Well UCI Health Blog: www.ucihealth.org/blog

The vibrant plants in this vegetarian dish make it an eye-catcher at any gathering as well as nutritious powerhouse with a garlicky aroma that's sure to tempt a hungry crowd.

Besides being delicious, garlic is low in calories and rich in vitamin C, vitamin B6 and manganese. Its use for health by ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, Greeks, Romans and Chinese is well documented. Scientists now know that most of garlic's nutrition benefits come from sulfur compounds that form when a garlic clove is chopped, crushed or chewed.

Tomatoes, which form the base of this traditional stew, are a major source of lycopene, an antioxidant linked to a reduced risk for cancer and heart disease. They also are loaded with vitamin C, potassium, folate and vitamin K.

Zucchini and yellow squash — which are classified as fruits, like tomatoes — help stabilize blood sugar levels and are high in vitamin A, which supports vision and immune system health. They are also high in fiber, vitamin C, potassium and carotenoids, which may lower blood pressure and cholesterol as well as reduce other risk factors for heart disease. Did you know that one medium yellow squash provides more potassium than a large banana? Potassium is an essential mineral that plays a vital role in muscle control, nerve function and balancing fluids.

Eggplant — a fruit also known as aubergine in Europe after its French name — is high in fiber yet low in calories, making it an ideal food to help promote weight loss. It's incredibly versatile and can be easily incorporated into many dishes. In addition to containing a variety of vitamins and minerals, eggplants are rich in antioxidants that help protect the body from harmful substances called free radicals. They are especially rich in anthocyanins, proven in multiple studies to be highly effective in protecting cells from damage.



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Ingredients

- 2 heads garlic
- 2 tablespoons avocado oil, divided in half
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup vegetable stock
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup canned crushed tomatoes
- $\frac{1}{2}$ onion cut into thin half moons
- 1 red bell pepper, sliced into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick rounds
- 1 zucchini cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick rounds
- 1 yellow squash cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick rounds
- 1 Italian eggplant or $\frac{1}{2}$ a globe eggplant, cut in $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick rounds
- Grated Parmesan cheese for garnish

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees, trim tops of garlic heads, leaving the root intact, and place on a foil sheet large enough to wrap both heads.
2. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon oil, then wrap.
3. Roast 30-40 minutes, remove from oven and set aside, and reduce oven temperature to 375 degrees.
4. In a mixing bowl, combine vegetable stock with crushed tomatoes, squeeze garlic cloves from cooked heads into the sauce and mix well.
5. Spread sauce in 8-inch or 9-inch baking dish and top with alternating layers of bell pepper, zucchini, squash, onion and eggplant.
6. Sprinkle with salt and pepper then drizzle with oil.
7. Cut parchment paper to fit atop the mixture or cover entire dish with foil.
8. Bake 35-40 minutes or until tender, remove from oven.
9. Garnish with Parmesan cheese, if desired, and serve.

Make ahead tips:

1. Prepare tomato sauce and remaining cut ingredients (except eggplant) and store refrigerated up to three days.
2. Just before assembling ingredients in baking dish, slice eggplant, which can turn brown if cut too early.