

Eggplant

- Eggplant, a native to southern India and Sri Lanka, gets its name from its shape.
- The eggplant is a fruit and is part of the nightshade (Solanaceae) family, which also includes tomatoes, potatoes, and chili peppers.
- China, India, Egypt, Turkey, and Japan are top world producers.
- The United States ranks 20th in eggplant production.
- Eggplants are perishable, so use within 2-3 days of purchase.
- Store at 40-45 degrees in high humidity, will keep for about 1 week.
- Select eggplant that has a glossy shine, dull color indicates overripe and bitter.
- Eggplant is a good source of Vitamin A, C, B complex and potassium.
- About 30 calories per cup.
- Wash the eggplant just before using.
- Cut off the cap and stem.
- Use a stainless steel knife, so not discolor the eggplant.
- **Eggplant should not be eaten raw.**
- Eggplant may be cooked with or without the skin, larger eggplant have thick tough skin and are better peeled prior to cooking. Eggplant may be blanched or steamed then frozen for up to 6 months.

Baking

Pierce the skin several times with a fork, cook at 400 degrees for 30 -40 min until soft and easy to mash or puree.

Broiling

Cut the eggplant into thick lengthwise slices and score them lightly with a sharp knife. Place the slices on a broiler pan or grill; brush lightly with oil. Broil about 5 inches from the heat, and turn slices when they begin to brown, approximately 5 minutes per side.

Microwaved

Whole, cubed, or sliced cooking times vary from 6 to 8 minutes for a whole eggplant to 3 or 4 minutes for a pound of cubed eggplant.

Stewed

Is called ratatouille. For this dish, eggplant may be stewed alone, or with other vegetables. Simmer, covered with a liquid such as tomato juice, until the eggplant is tender. The cooking time is usually 20 to 25 minutes.

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