

Try Me!

Eggplant

FUN FACTS:

Italians call eggplant melanzane which means crazy apple

- Eggplant is a fruit and is 95% water.
- It is native to India and Sri Lanka.
- It is part of the nightshade family, which includes potatoes, tomatoes, and peppers.
- It is called eggplant in the US, Canada, and Australia because eggplants in those countries were purely ornamental and featured egg-shaped white and yellow fruit.
- Salting eggplant will reduce the amount of oil absorbed in cooking.
- China is the top producer of eggplant in the world.
- The U.S. is 20th in eggplant production.
- In various parts of Europe, people suspected that eating eggplant caused madness which is why eggplant was used mostly for decoration in England and the US nearly up to the 20th century.
- Eggplant is high in potassium, low in calories, and is a good source of fiber.



Selection

- ▶ You should look for symmetrical eggplants that are smooth and have uniformly colored skin.
- ▶ Tan patches, scars, or bruises indicate decay.
- ▶ Oversized purple eggplants, usually over 6 inches in diameter, may be tough and bitter.
- ▶ When you press gently on eggplant your finger mark will disappear quickly if the eggplant is fresh.

Storage

- ▶ It's best to store eggplant uncut and unwashed in a plastic bag in the coolest section of the refrigerator.

Preparation

- ▶ Wash the eggplant just before using it and cut off the cap and stem.
- ▶ Eggplant should not be eaten raw.
- ▶ It can be cooked with or without its skin.
- ▶ Unlike many vegetables, eggplant is not harmed by long cooking.
- ▶ Spices that enhance flavor: basil, bay leaves, garlic, chili powder, oregano, sage, thyme, marjoram, and parsley.
- ▶ Under cooking eggplant may give it a chewy texture.



Make Eggplant Part of your 5 Day Plan

- Sprinkle minced garlic and herbs over eggplant slices before grilling for extra taste.
- Add eggplant to lasagna to add color, taste, and texture.
- Blend eggplant to spinach dips.
- Add eggplant to vegetable soups for a heartier texture.
- Grill eggplant and add it to your favorite sandwich.