

STUFFED EGGPLANT

NL#3-22 10/26/02

3 small eggplants (about 3/4 pound each)
Salt
4 slices bacon
1 cup onions, finely chopped
1 cup thick tomato sauce
2 cloves garlic, minced or pressed
1 TBS fresh parsley, chopped
3/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan or Asiago cheese
Freshly ground black pepper
Bread crumbs
Olive oil

Thoroughly scrub eggplants. Remove and discard stems. Cut the eggplants in half and scoop out the pulp, leaving a 1/2 inch shell. Place the pulp from the eggplants into a colander. Sprinkle the hollowed-out shells and the pulp with salt and let stand for 30-45 minutes. Rinse both the pulp and the shells thoroughly and dry.

Dice the bacon and sauté in a large skillet until golden brown. Pour half the bacon grease into a container and reserve. In the remaining bacon grease, sauté the onion and garlic over low heat until soft. Add the rinsed and dried eggplant pulp along with additional bacon grease, if necessary. Sauté for 3-5 minutes or until soft. Add the tomato sauce and parsley and simmer for 10 minutes. Add the grated cheese and bacon and heat through. Remove from heat and set aside.

Preheat broiler. Brush outside of eggplant shells with olive oil and place on baking sheets. Place under broiler and broil just until the skin begins to bubble. Remove from oven and drain on paper towels. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Fill each eggplant shell with the tomato and pulp mixture until mounded and place in baking dish. Sprinkle with breadcrumbs and drizzle with olive oil. Bake for 45-60 minutes. Serve hot or lukewarm. 4 servings.