

PROVENÇAL VEGETABLE TIAN



TIPS:

1. **Tian** is a French word derived from the Greek term for “frying pan” and has two meanings. A tian is both a shallow earthenware cooking pot and a fantastically flavorful dish made with layered, thinly sliced vegetables baked with herbs, oil and garlic in that same pot and known particularly to the Provence, or southeastern region of France.
2. **Making it easy with no compromise in flavor:** The original recipe calls for layering the vegetable slices about as shown here.



I found layering like this to be both time consuming and not necessary. Instead, I cut the vegetables, mixed them in a bowl with oil, seasoning and cheese, and then poured everything together right into a baking dish. Easy.

Preparation Time: 15-20 minutes

Baking Time: 25-30 minutes

Ingredients (for 4 or more)

1/2 Cup Olive Oil

1/4 Cup Vinegar (I'm using balsamic vinegar for its rich sweet & sour flavor, but cider or red wine vinegar will work)

4-6 Large Fresh Garlic Cloves

1 Tablespoon Herbes de Provence (or Italian Seasoning)

1 Bell Pepper (yellow, orange and red bell peppers are sweeter and more flavorful than green bell peppers)

1 Zucchini

1 Yellow (Summer) Squash

1 Small Eggplant

2 Italian Plum Tomatoes

1/2 Large (or 1 small) Onion

Big Handful of Fresh Basil

Grated or Shredded Parmesan Cheese

1/2 Teaspoon Salt

Ground Black Pepper

Crushed Red Pepper (optional)



Equipment

Baking Dish

Spatula

Large Sharp (Chef's) Knife

Large Cutting Board

Potholders or Folded Dishtowels

Large Bowl (I'd recommend using one larger than the one you see here. You'll see why in step 6.)

Measuring Cup

Tablespoon

Timer



1. Give the **bell pepper, tomatoes, a big handful of fresh basil, yellow squash, zucchini** and **eggplant** a good hand scrubbing rinse with cold tap water.



2. Pull **4-6 fresh large garlic cloves** from a **garlic bulb**. Then...



...crunch, peel and...



...chop them like this.



3. Pour **1/2 cup (4 ounces) of olive oil** into a measuring cup along with...



...1/4 cup (2 ounces) of balsamic (or other) vinegar.



Add 1 tablespoon of Herbes de Provence (or Italian seasoning), chopped garlic...



...1/2 teaspoon salt (or as much as shown here), a crunch of ground black pepper, and...



...stir until the **ingredients** are well mixed together.

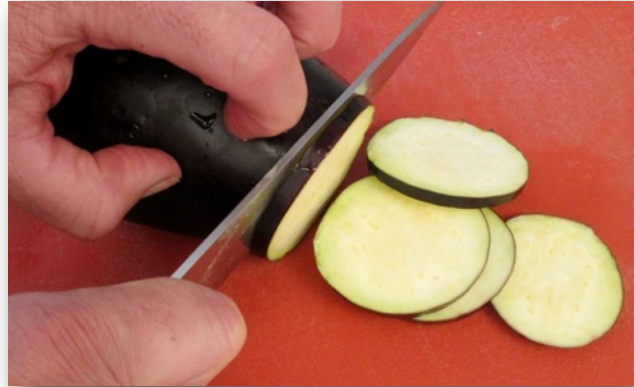


4. Place an oven rack in the middle of the oven, and preheat the oven to 450 degrees (230° C).



5. Cut the **vegetables** as shown below:

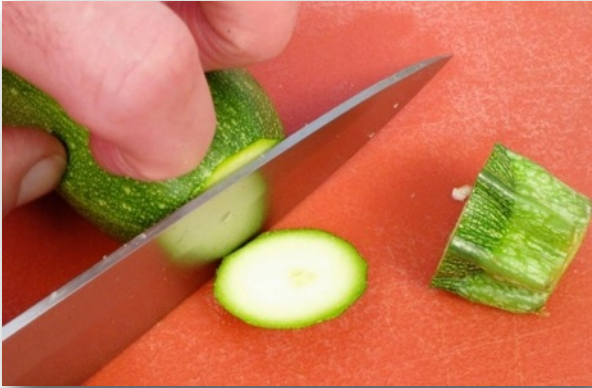
Eggplant - First remove the **stem top**. Then cut the **eggplant** in cross section into thin slices about 1/8 inch (3 mm) wide.



Yellow squash - First remove the **stem** and **front tips**. Then cut the **squash** in cross section into thin slices about 1/8 inch (3 mm) wide.



Zucchini - First remove the **stem** and **front tips**. Then cut the **zucchini** in cross section into thin slices about 1/8 inch (3 mm) wide.



Bell Pepper - Start at the **stem**, cut the **pepper** in half lengthwise, and pull the **pepper** apart.



Remove the **stem** and **seed cluster** and slice into thin strips about 1/4 inch (6 mm) wide.



Onion - Cut the **onion** in half lengthwise, and remove the **stem** and **root end** of one of the **onion halves** if you're

using a **large onion**, or remove the **stem** and **root ends** from **both halves** of a **small onion**.



Peel off the **skin**, and cut the **onion half** (or halves) into thin strips about 1/4 inch (6 mm) wide.



Tomato - Cut the **tomato** into cross section slices about 1/4 inch (6 mm) wide.



6. Put all the **sliced vegetables** into a bowl (I'd recommend using a bigger bowl than the one you see here. You'll see why soon. I had to improvise - that's the biggest bowl I have.)



Pour the **seasoned oil mixture** over the vegetables in the bowl, and add a **good shot of grated or shredded Parmesan cheese**.



Mix by hand (or with a spoon) until the **vegetables** are evenly coated with the **seasoned oil mixture**, and...



...pour them into a baking dish.



7. When the oven warms to 450 degrees (230° C), put the baking dish in the oven, and set a timer for 25 minutes.



8. While the **vegetables** cook, cut and chop the **basil leaves** coarsely like this.



9. When the timer sounds, check the **vegetables** for doneness by driving the tip of a sharp knife into either the **eggplant**, **zucchini** or **yellow squash**. The **vegetables** are cooked to doneness when the knife pierces the **vegetables** easily but are not overly soft and mushy (I like the vegetables still to have some crunch to them). If, your **vegetables** are still firm, keep baking at 5 minute intervals until they have softened as shown in the picture below.



10. When the **vegetables** are done, use a potholder or folded dish towel to take the baking dish out of the oven.



Top with **more grated or shredded Parmesan cheese** and **chopped fresh basil** and...



...serve warm either as is or with **crushed red pepper** to taste.



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