

Stuffed courgettes with cheese

Round courgettes can be sliced thinly and fried, but they are best stuffed and baked with a cheese topping. I create this dish when I have vegetarian friends for super, as it is both tasty and nutritious - it's easy to prepare too. What's more they look good. One per person is usually enough, but I often cook extra in case people want seconds.

To serve 4 people you will need

- One round courgette per person and perhaps a couple more
- One onion - diced fine
- 4 tomatoes - diced fine
- 2 cloves garlic - chopped fine
- 2 oz (50g) mushrooms - chopped fine
- 2 sticks celery - chopped fine
- 1 dspn fresh marjoram - chopped fine
- 1 dspn parsley - chopped fine
- 4 oz (125g) cheese
- 2 tbs olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black peppercorns to season

Note: the vegetables listed are just a suggestion, if you have other vegetables in your fridge these can be added too. The mix is really up to you.

Method

- Cut off the top of the courgette, this acts as a lid when served.
- Using a spoon carefully remove the centre of each courgette and chop the flesh you have removed into small pieces.
- Drop the courgettes and the tops into boiling salted water and cook until they begin to soften. Remove from the pot and place upside down on kitchen paper so that they can drain.
- In a large frying pan, to which you have added the oil, place all the chopped vegetables and herbs and fry over a gentle heat until almost cooked. Season and remove from the heat.
- Cut half the cheese into small cubes and add to the stuffing mix and slice the rest for the topping.
- Place the courgette shells onto a baking tray and spoon in the filling, then top with slices of cheeses when they are full.
- Place the filled courgettes under a hot grill until the cheese begins to bubble and brown, add the tops to the tray and continue cooking for a moment to warm then through, then remove and serve, placing the top back in place.