

Aubergine and chestnut pie recipe

(With thanks to Leiths School of Food & Wine)



For the aubergine layer

1 medium-sized aubergine, cut into cubes
5 tablespoons olive oil
3 tomatoes, roughly chopped
2 tablespoons tomato purée
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 tablespoon fresh basil chopped
1 tablespoon fresh marjoram, chopped
salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the nut layer

1 small onion, finely chopped
2 sticks celery, finely chopped
55ml water
110g walnuts, roughly chopped
110g unsweetened chestnut purée
55g peeled and cooked chestnuts, roughly chopped (see notes)
30g fresh wholemeal bread cubes

For the courgette layer

225g courgettes, sliced
1 small bunch chives, finely chopped
1 tablespoon single cream (omit if vegan)
salt and freshly ground black pepper

To finish

3 tablespoons oil
7 sheets filo pastry
1 tablespoon sesame seeds

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6.
2. Heat 3 tablespoons of the oil in a frying pan to cover the base and add the aubergine cubes. Fry them until beginning to soften.
3. Add the tomatoes, tomato purée, garlic, basil and marjoram. Season with salt and pepper and cook gently until tender.
4. Make the nut layer. Cook the onions and celery in 1 tablespoon of oil until soft. Add the water, walnuts, chestnut purée, chestnuts, bread cubes, salt and pepper. Cook for 2-3 minutes.
5. Sauté the courgettes in the remaining oil. When tender add the cream, chives salt and pepper.
6. Layer the fillings up in a large dish, starting with the aubergines and finishing with the courgettes.
7. Cover the pie with 7 layers of filo pastry, brushing each layer with oil. Brush the top with oil and sprinkle with the sesame seeds.
8. Bake for 20 minutes or until the top is golden brown.

NOTE: To get 55g of peeled cooked chestnuts you will need to buy about 170g of fresh chestnuts. To cook them, make a slit in the skin of each chestnut, and put them into a pan of cold water. Bring to the boil, simmer for 10 minutes, and then take off the heat. Remove 1 or 2 nuts at a time and peel - the skins come off quite easily - if the chestnuts are hot but not overcooked. Alternatively they can be bought ready peeled.