

Rustic Eggplant Dip (Melanzanosalata)

Ingredients:

2 small eggplants (1-1/2 lb. total)
1 Tbs. plus 1 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1/4 cup seeded and finely diced fresh tomato
2 Tbs. minced yellow onion
1-1/2 tsp. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
1 tsp. red-wine vinegar
1/2 tsp. chopped fresh oregano or marjoram
1/2 tsp. chopped fresh thyme
1/2 tsp. chopped fresh mint
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Prepare a medium gas or charcoal grill fire (charcoal will give a smokier flavor). Prick the eggplants once with the tip of a paring knife to prevent them from swelling and exploding and rub all over with 1 Tbs. of the oil. Grill, covered but turning every few minutes, until the eggplants are very soft inside and the skins are charred, 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool.

Cut the stems off the eggplants and peel away the charred skin; discard the stems and skin. Coarsely chop the flesh and transfer it to a medium bowl. Add the remaining 1 tsp. oil and the tomato, onion, parsley, lemon juice, vinegar, oregano or marjoram, thyme, mint, 1 tsp. salt, and 1/8 tsp. pepper. Mix well. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours before serving. Season to taste with more salt. Serve cool or at room temperature with fresh pita wedges or [toasted pita chips](#).

Make Ahead Tips

The eggplant can be grilled or broiled several hours or up to 2 days before making the salad. For best flavor, make the dip a day ahead.

Variations -

Can't grill the eggplant? Use the oven.

To **broil the eggplants**, position a rack 6 inches from the broiler and heat the broiler to high. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil. Prick the eggplants once with a paring knife to prevent them from exploding. Put them on the baking sheet and rub all over with 1 Tbs. olive oil. Broil, turning once, until the skin is charred in spots and the flesh is tender, 25 to 30 minutes.

If your oven doesn't have a broiler element, you can **roast the eggplants** instead. Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 450°F. Prick and oil the eggplants as directed above. Roast until the skins are wrinkled and the eggplant flesh is very soft, about 1 hour.

Credit: finecooking.com