

STUFFED EGGPLANT

6-7 MEDIUM EGGPLANTS (ABOUT 1 1/4 LB EACH) SPLIT LENGTHWISE
4 TBS OLIVE OIL
1 LB PORK SAUSAGE
1 LG. CHOPPED ONION
1 SWEET GREEN BELL PEPPER CHOPPED
5 CLOVES MINCED GARLIC
1 tsp SALT
1/2 tsp Essence (recipe follows)
1/2 tsp ground black pepper
3 medium Roma plum tomatoes, seeded and chopped
1/4 cup dried parsley
2TBS dried oregano
1 cup bread crumbs
1 cup crumbled Feta

Preheat the oven to 350

Halve the eggplants lengthwise and with a sharp knife score the pulp in a diamond pattern, being careful not to pierce the skins. Scoop out the pulp with a spoon, leaving a 1/2 in. shell. Chop the pulp. Place the eggplant shells on a greased baking sheet and lightly brush the inside of each half with about 1 tsp. of olive oil. Bake until the shells are softened but not brown, about 15 mins. Remove from the oven and let cool.

In a heavy skillet heat remaining 2 TBS of olive oil over medium heat. Add the pork sausage and cook until done, about 5 mins. Remove with slotted spoon to drain on paper towel. Add the onions and bell peppers to the fat in the pan and cook, stirring, for 3 mins. Add the garlic, eggplant, salt, Essence and pepper, and cook until the eggplant is soft, 3-4 mins. Add the tomatoes and cook until they give off their liquid, 3 mins. Add the parsley and oregano, and stir well. Remove from heat. Stir in 3/4 cup bread crumbs and mix well into the vegetables. Stir in the feta, and reseason as needed. Divide the filling among the eggplant shells, and sprinkle the remaining 1/4 cup of bread crumbs over the tops. Bake until tops are golden and the stuffing is heated through, about 30 mins.

ESSENCE

2 1/2 TBS paprika
2TBS salt
2TBS garlic powder
1 TBS black pepper
1 TBS onion powder
1 TBS cayenne pepper
1 TBS dried leaf oregano