Classic French Ratatouille Recipe

Serves: 4-6

Prep time: 20 min

Cook time: 45-60 min

Ingredients:

- 1 medium eggplant, diced
- 1 zucchini, diced
- 1 yellow squash (optional), diced
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 yellow bell pepper, chopped
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 3–4 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 ripe tomatoes, chopped (or 1 can diced tomatoes, drained slightly)
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon herbes de Provence (or dried thyme + oregano + rosemary)
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- Fresh basil or parsley, to garnish

Q Instructions:

1. Salt the eggplant (optional but traditional):

Place diced eggplant in a colander, sprinkle with salt, and let sit for 20 minutes to draw out bitterness. Rinse and pat dry.

2. Sauté vegetables separately:

In a large pan or Dutch oven, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil over medium heat.

- Sauté eggplant until golden and soft. Remove and set aside.
- Repeat with zucchini, squash (if using), and peppers—sautéing each separately in batches and removing once lightly browned.

This step helps prevent a mushy texture and keeps flavors distinct.

3. Cook aromatics:

Add another tablespoon of olive oil and sauté the onion until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook another minute.

4. Combine and simmer:

Add all the sautéed vegetables back into the pot. Add the chopped tomatoes, herbes de Provence, salt, and pepper. Stir gently to combine.

5. Simmer uncovered:

Let the ratatouille simmer gently on low heat for 30–40 minutes, stirring occasionally. It should be soft and slightly saucy, not watery.

6. Taste and finish:

Adjust seasoning. Let it sit for 10 minutes (or better—make it a day ahead; flavors deepen overnight).

7. Serve with:

Crusty bread, grilled fish, couscous, fried eggs, or just as it is, warm or cold. Garnish with fresh basil or parsley.

📝 Tips:

- Make-ahead magic: Ratatouille is even better the next day.
- Rustic version: Chop all veggies roughly and cook together from the start for a peasant-style version.
- Fancy version (like in the Pixar film): Arrange sliced vegetables over a rich tomato sauce and bake like a tian—this is technically confit byaldi, a modern take.