

Eggplant Salad with Onions and Peppers (Escalivada)

Although escalivar means "to grill," many restaurant cooks in Spain roast their vegetables, as it is easier and requires less attention.

Ingredients

2 red onions, unpeeled
Olive oil for rubbing on onions, plus 1 cup
3 eggplant
3 tomatoes
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2 red bell peppers
1/2 cup fresh lemon juice
3 garlic cloves, minced
Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
Chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley for garnish

Method

Preheat an oven to 400°F.

Put the onions in a small baking pan and rub with olive oil. Roast until tender when pierced, at least 1 hour. Let stand until cool enough to handle, then peel and cut into slices 1/2 inch thick.

At the same time, prick each eggplant in several places with a fork and place them in a separate baking pan. Add the tomatoes to the pan and place in the oven along with the onions. Roast the tomatoes until the skins blacken, about 15 minutes.

Let stand until cool enough to handle, then peel and cut into cubes. Continue to roast the eggplant until soft but not mushy, about 45 minutes. Let cool, then peel and tear into large strips. Place in a colander to drain.

Turn the oven to broil. Cut the bell peppers in half lengthwise and remove the stems, seeds and ribs. Place the peppers, cut sides down, on a baking sheet. Broil until the skins blacken and blister. Remove from the broiler and drape the peppers with aluminum foil. Let cool for 10 minutes and then peel away the skins. Cut the peppers into long, narrow strips.

Combine the onions, eggplant, tomatoes and peppers in a large bowl. In a small bowl, whisk together the 1 cup olive oil, the lemon juice and garlic. Season with salt and pepper. Pour over the eggplant mixture and toss to coat well. Taste and adjust the seasonings. Sprinkle the salad with parsley and serve.

