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Baingan Bharta

Enjoyed as a main course accompanied by basmati rice or served as a vegetarian side with naan or roti, this dish is definitely a crowd-pleaser.

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

3 Tbs. peanut or other neutral oil
2 lb. eggplant (about 2 medium)
1-1/2 lb. ripe tomatoes (about 3 medium)
1 medium sweet onion, peeled and quartered
1 medium jalapeño
Kosher salt
1 oz. (2 Tbs.) ghee or unsalted butter
1/3 cup roasted salted cashews, coarsely chopped
1/4 cup golden raisins
4 cloves garlic, finely chopped or grated
1-1/2 Tbs. grated fresh ginger
2 tsp. garam masala
1/4 cup coarsely chopped fresh cilantro
Cooked basmati rice, naan, or roti
1 lime, cut into wedges

INSTRUCTIONS

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the broiler on high. Brush some of the oil on a large rimmed baking sheet.

Put the eggplant, tomatoes, onion, and jalapeño on the baking sheet. Pierce the eggplant all over with a knife and brush the vegetables all over with the remaining oil. Broil the vegetables, turning them a couple of times during cooking, until the eggplant is very soft and well charred, and the other vegetables are well charred in places, about 25 minutes.

When cool enough to handle, peel and discard the stem and skin of the eggplant, tomatoes, and jalapeño (discard the seeds for less heat), leaving some charred bits behind. Coarsely chop the vegetables directly on the baking sheet, season with 1 tsp. salt and stir to combine.

In a large skillet, heat the ghee over low heat until melted. Add the cashews, raisins, garlic, ginger, garam masala, and 1 tsp. salt. Cook, stirring frequently, until fragrant, about 5 minutes. Using a rubber spatula, transfer the eggplant mixture to the skillet along with all the juices from the baking sheet. Raise the heat to medium, and cook, stirring frequently and breaking up any large pieces of eggplant, until just heated through, about 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt, top with the cilantro, and serve with rice or naan and lime wedges.