

The following three recipes were crafted by Michal Monsonego Landor, a Moroccan Jew who simply loves to cook her mother's dishes.

Smoked Eggplant Appetizer

Patience level: low

Ingredients:

- eggplants (suggestion: for 5 people, use 2 Violet of Florence eggplants)
- salt
- pepper
- mayonnaise (1 spoon)
- garlic clove (1)
- lemon (1)

Instructions:

1. poke eggplants with a fork
2. place the eggplants in a broiler (500 degrees) for approximately ½ hour each side (you'll know they're ready when you poke the eggplant head - if the knife enters softly, it's ready!)
3. once done broiling, cut off the heads, then slice the eggplants down the middle
4. take a large spoon and remove all of the insides (place the insides into a bowl)
5. mince the garlic clove and add to bowl
6. add 1 spoon of mayonnaise to bowl
7. add salt and pepper to taste preference
8. squeeze 1 lemon into the bowl
9. with a large fork, mix all the ingredients in the bowl together

Pro-tip: pairs well with pita chips!

Meat-filled Filo Dough

Patience level: **medium**

Ingredients:

- filo dough (1 package frozen or handmade)
- ground beef (½ lb)
- white onions (2)
- fresh spinach (2 bunches)
- pine nuts (½ cup)
- raisins (½ cup, dark or light)
- flour (1 spoon)
- 1 egg (beaten)
- salt
- pepper
- cumin
- vegetable cooking oil

Instructions:

1. unfreeze filo dough for ½ hour
2. slice onions, sautee in heavy pan
3. add ground beef to sauteed onions and stir until all of the meat is cooked/brown
4. cut and add 2 bunches of fresh spinach to the pan
5. add raisins to the pan
6. bake pine nuts for 3 minutes in an oven or toaster oven until they get a little brown
*be careful! they burn quickly!
7. add salt, pepper & cumin to taste preference (we like to use 1 spoon of salt, ½ spoon of pepper, ½ spoon of cumin!)
8. let meat cool down in the pan; meanwhile, open filo dough package & slice dough in half
9. prep flour on the counter and with a roller open half of the filo dough to a rectangle of approximately 20 inches by 12 inches
10. fill the filo dough with half of the meat quantity - place it in the center of the dough & close it from both sides by pinching at the edges
11. repeat steps 9 & 10 with the other half of the filo dough & meat quantity
12. brush all of the filled filo dough with the beaten egg
13. place all of the filled filo dough in the oven on 350 degrees for 45 minutes
14. filo dough will be ready when golden

Enjoy!

Matbucha Appetizer

Patience level: **high**

This recipe may have just a few ingredients, but it requires patience as it takes time and effort to prepare it.

Ingredients:

- ripe large (steak) tomatoes (10 semi-soft)
- light green peppers (6, not spicy)
- jalapenos (6, indeed spicy)
- garlic cloves (2)
- vegetable cooking oil
- salt

Instructions:

1. place all peppers (light green and jalapenos) in a broiler (500 degrees)
2. meanwhile, boil a pot of water
3. mark x's with a sharp knife on the bottom of the tomatoes, then place them in a large pot
4. pour the boiled water onto the tomatoes; let them sit for 5 minutes
5. meanwhile, don't forget to check the peppers and turn occasionally until all sides are baked (darker colored)
6. once peppers are ready, put them into a plastic bag and let them cool down (this makes it easier to peel them)
7. pour out the water from the pot with tomatoes and peel the tomato skins
8. slice the tomatoes in half and remove all the tomato juice (requires hand squeezing)
9. chop the squeezed tomatoes into small chunks
10. place them in a pan filled with ½ cup of oil
11. let the tomatoes cook on a medium flame
12. mince the garlic cloves, then add to the pan of tomatoes
13. add salt to taste preference
14. let the tomatoes cook (still on medium flame)
15. meanwhile, peel all of the peppers (don't touch your eyes!) and chop them
16. add chopped peppers to the tomatoes
17. let cook for 2-3 hours on low flame by stirring every 15-20 minutes until all of the water evaporates and it becomes like a jelly-like substance

Bon Appetit!