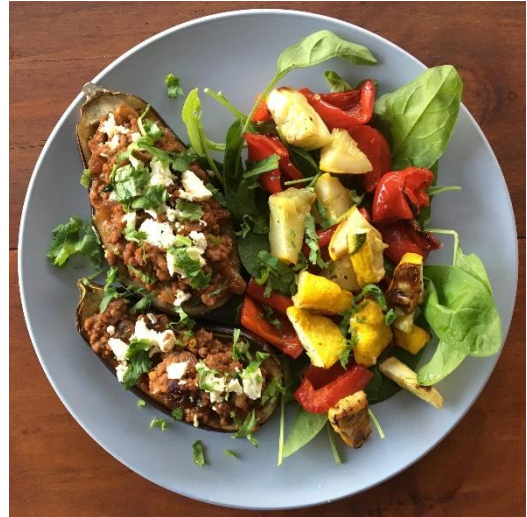


Middle-Eastern Eggplant Stuffed with Spiced Beef & Lentils

Serves 6

Ingredients

- 3 large (or 6 small) eggplants, halved
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 red onion, finely diced
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon chilli flakes (optional)
- 2 teaspoons sweet paprika
- 500g lean beef mince
- 1/3 cup sultanas or currants
- 400g tin diced tomatoes
- 400g tin brown lentils, drained and rinsed
- 200g feta
- 1 bunch fresh coriander, roughly chopped
- seasonal greens (steamed) or a side salad, to serve



Method

Preheat oven to 200 degrees Celsius. Line a baking tray with baking paper.

Using a small pointed knife, make a cut all the way around the halved eggplant at about 1cm in from the edge and about 2cm deep, taking care to follow the shape of the eggplant and not pierce through the skin. This will make it easier to scoop out the flesh later when cooked.

Brush the flat cut side of the eggplant halves with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. Place on baking tray, cut side up, and bake in oven for about 20 minutes or until mostly cooked and slightly soft & golden.

Meanwhile, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat. Add onion and sauté until softened and lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Stir in the crushed garlic, cinnamon, cumin, chilli flakes and sweet paprika for the last minute to cook.

Add beef mince and fry until lightly browned, stirring well to break up the mince. Add sultanas, diced tomatoes and lentils. Cook uncovered, stirring occasionally, for about 15 minutes.

Remove eggplant from the oven and use a spoon to scoop most of the flesh out. Roughly chop it, then add it to the beef mixture. Stir through.

Fill the eggplant halves with the beef mixture, dividing evenly between them. Crumble the feta over the top then place back in the oven for about 5-10 minutes, until feta is golden brown.

To serve, place eggplant on a plate, top with the coriander and serve with seasonal steamed greens or a side salad.