



Ratatouille

SERVES 4-6

One of my favorite Disney movie characters is Remy, the rat who aspired to become a chef in the movie Ratatouille. The film brought recognition to the dish ratatouille, a popular dish in France. It's simply a stew made from vegetables and seasonings, particularly those that are in season. Sometimes I make it in a cast iron skillet over an outdoor fire, and the smoke adds another dimension of flavor. I serve it on toasted bread for an appetizer, but it's also a great side dish for grilled meat and fish. I once stayed at a guesthouse in southern France that served ratatouille every morning with scrambled eggs. This is an easy recipe that can be varied according to what vegetables you have on hand. When you make it, give a little salute to Remy!

INGREDIENTS

3 tablespoons olive oil	1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1 onion, chopped	1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
1 red bell pepper, chopped	1/2 teaspoon fennel seeds
1 green pepper, chopped	2 teaspoons salt
1 eggplant (about 3/4 pound), cut into 1/2" pieces	1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 zucchini, chopped	1 tablespoon Champagne vinegar
1 cup chopped tomatoes	1/2 cup torn fresh basil leaves

PROCESS:

In a large skillet, heat olive oil over medium high heat. Add onion, red bell pepper, green pepper, eggplant, and zucchini. Stir until vegetables are tender. Stir in tomatoes, spices, salt and pepper. Cook for 5 minutes, then add vinegar. Taste to see if more salt is needed. Remove from heat and stir in basil. Serve warm.