Eggplant

Background:
Pairs well with other vegetables, cheeses, herbs/spices, and sauces
Prepared in a variety of ways with unique flavor profiles from around the world.
Grew wild in India and first cultivated in China in the 5th century B.C.
Introduced to Africa before the Middle Ages and spread to Europe, the Middle East, then to the Western Hemisphere

Nutritional Value:
Very good source of dietary fiber, vitamin B1, and copper
Rich in manganese, vitamin B6, niacin, potassium, folate, and vitamin K
Contains phytonutrients such as nasunin and chlorogenic acid
**Eggplant**

**How to SHOP:**
- Choose eggplant that is firm, shiny, smooth, and without shriveling, blemishes, or soft spots
- Stem should be fresh and green, not dried out or brown
- Eggplants are available year-round but are in season during August and September

**How to GROW:**
- Eggplants love the warmth—plant them during the summer season in a sunny spot. If planning to transplant from seedling to the garden, start seeds 8-10 weeks before your last frost date
- Eggplants grow into tall, angular plants—space seedlings 24-36” apart
- Harvest when the skin of the fruit is shiny and unwrinkled, about 16-24 weeks after sowing

**How to STORE:**
- Store eggplants at room temperature for 1-2 days, then transfer to the refrigerator for up to 7 days
- Best to use as soon as possible as it suffers chill damage quickly
Parmesan Eggplant Fries

INGREDIENTS:

2 medium Italian eggplants  
1 cup panko breadcrumbs  
1/2 cup finely grated parmesan cheese  
3 large eggs

1/2 cup wheat flour  
1/2 tsp. salt  
Non-stick cooking spray  
Marinara sauce, for serving

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and coat with cooking spray.

Remove stem from the eggplant and cut into 1/2 inch fries.

Prepare the breading station with three bowls: In the first bowl, combine flour and salt. In the second bowl, whisk eggs. In the third bowl, combine breadcrumbs and parmesan.

Prepare eggplant fries in batches: Using the three bowls, first coat eggplant in flour, then egg, and then breadcrumbs.

Place the eggplant fries in a single layer on the baking sheet and spray a coat of cooking spray on top.

Bake until crispy and golden brown, about 15 minutes. Serve with marinara sauces for dipping.

HELPFUL TIPS:

Add different spices to the breading mixture to create unique flavor combinations.

Use different types of eggplants for variance in texture and flavor.

Try making your own dipping sauces to pair with the fries.
Baba Ganoush

**INGREDIENTS:**
- 1 medium white eggplant
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp. tahini
- 3 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 Tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped
- Salt, to taste

**DIRECTIONS:**
Preheat oven to 400°F.

Cut the eggplant in half lengthwise and brush the cut sides lightly with 1 Tbsp. olive oil.

Place eggplant on a baking sheet, cut side down, and roast until very tender, about 35-40 minutes. Allow to cool after baking.

Once cooled, scoop the eggplant flesh into a large bowl and coarsely mash with a fork. Combine with remaining ingredients in food processor and process until smooth.

Top dip with fresh chopped parsley and serve with choice of veggies or pita.

**HELPFUL TIPS:**
For a chunkier texture, combine ingredients with a fork and do not use the food processor.

Baba ganoush is a great dip for vegetables like sliced bell peppers or carrot sticks.

Try this recipe as a spread on sandwiches or as a topping for your next baked dish.
Sweet Korean Eggplant

INGREDIENTS:
1 Tbsp. canola or olive oil
1/2 white onion, sliced
1 Japanese eggplant, cut into 1-inch strips
1/4 tsp. sesame seeds, for garnish
1 Tbsp. green onions, sliced, for garnish

Sauce:
1/2 cup water
1/4 cup soy sauce
2 Tbsp. brown sugar
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tsp. ginger, minced
1 tsp. sesame oil
1 tsp. corn starch
1/2 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes

DIRECTIONS:
In a small bowl, mix together sauce ingredients and set aside.

Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat.

Add onion and sauté until soft and translucent. Add eggplant and sauce to the skillet.

Cover and simmer until eggplant is cooked and liquid has evaporated, about 10 minutes.

Garnish with green onions and sesame seeds.

HELPFUL TIPS:
Too spicy or not spicy enough? Adjust the amount of red pepper flakes to your liking.
If gluten-intolerant, substitute gluten-free tamari or coconut aminos for the soy sauce.
Serve as a side dish alongside brown rice, quinoa, or noodles.