

Courgettes farcies

(Stuffed Zucchini) - serves 12

INGREDIENTS

12 medium sizes zucchini (each about 6" long & 1-1/2" in diameter)
3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil (for baking the zucchini) plus 6 tbsp (for the prosciutto)
1 large onion, chopped fine
3 cloves garlic, chopped fine
3 slices prosciutto end (6 oz.) chopped fine
6 tsp chopped fresh marjoram (or 3 tsp chopped fresh thyme or ¾ tsp of dried thyme leaves)
3 slices dense-crust white bread, crusts removed
¾ cup milk
1-1/2 cups finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
Salt
Pepper

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Wash the zucchini thoroughly, trim off the stems and cut the zucchini in half lengthwise. Rub the zucchini with olive oil and arrange them flat side down on a sheet pan. Bake for 25-35 minutes, or until the zucchini feel soft when you pinch them gently. Take them out of the oven, but leave the oven on.
2. While the zucchini are baking, cook the onion, garlic and prosciutto in olive oil in a sauté pan over low to medium heat until the onion turns translucent (about 10 minutes). Sprinkle with marjoram and cook for one minute more.
3. Soak the bread in the milk.
4. Scoop the pulp out of the zucchini with a melon baller, being careful not to break through the skin. (It's o.k. to leave some pulp attached to the skin.) Combine the pulp with the onion mixture and continue to cook it on the stove to evaporate the moisture in the zucchini pulp. Stir in the bread and cheese and season to taste with salt and pepper.
5. Carefully put the stuffing back in the zucchini – the stuffing will form a mound – and return the zucchini to the oven. (If the zucchini will not stay level in the sheet pan, spread crumpled aluminum foil on the sheet pan and gently press the zucchini into the foil. Bake at 400 degrees until golden brown on top, about 20-25 minutes. Plate with the meat and serve.