

GRILLED EGGPLANT AND WALNUT DUKKAH

This gorgeous plate of grilled eggplant makes a wonderful main or shared platter. It's a lovely combination of cooked and raw veges. You can use whatever greens you like but try and stick with the herbs as they really bring the dish together. You can also substitute the baba ganoush for hummus or tzatziki.

The walnut dukkah is really delicious and a great recipe in its own right. It can be thrown over salads or roasted veges. If you don't have walnuts, you can use pecans, hazelnuts or almonds instead.

Equipment: Pestle and mortar or food processor.

Make time: 20mins

3-4 eggplants
large bunch of Russian Red kale (or other leafy greens),
destemmed and lightly torn
large handful of parsley,
leaves picked or roughly chopped
large handful of mint, leaves picked.
1/3 red onion
amaranth microgreens to decorate (optional)
1 tablespoon of olive oil
½ lemon



Finely slice the onion and place in a bowl of iced water to reduce the intensity of the flavour.

Slice the eggplants into 1 cm thick slices, then place on a tray and sprinkle both sides with salt. Leave for 10-20 mins until you can see moisture being pulled out of it. Salting reduces bitterness but most noticeably it gives the eggplant a softer texture.

Rinse the eggplant and dry it with a clean tea towel or paper towels.

Place a large heavy-based saucepan over a medium to high heat, put the slices of eggplant on the pan dry and cook for around 5 mins each side until charred in spots. You could also cook on a griddle pan or barbecue. The eggplant should be soft in the middle but still holding its shape. If it hasn't cooked through, you could finish cooking it in the oven at around 160 degrees.

Place the finished eggplant on a plate and drizzle with a little olive oil and a squeeze of lemon juice.

Dukkah

½ cup of activated walnuts (see note below)
2 teaspoons coriander seeds
2 teaspoons cumin seeds
1 teaspoon fennel seeds
½ teaspoon whole black peppercorns
½ teaspoon of flaky sea salt
1 tablespoon of sesame seeds (optional)

Place all the ingredients except the walnuts and salt in a small heavy based frying pan and place over low-medium heat.

Toast the spices for a few minutes until fragrant and golden – be careful not to burn them, they will lose their flavour if you do.

Allow to cool for a few minutes, then place in a pestle and mortar or food processor with the walnuts and salt and coarsely grind the mixture.

You can make this ahead of time and store in an air tight container for a few weeks.

Baba Ganoush

2 eggplants

2 garlic cloves, crushed

juice of 1 lemon

1 teaspoon ground cumin

2 tablespoons tahini

Pre-heat oven to 230 degrees Celsius. Prick skins of eggplants with fork, then bake in oven for 30-40 minutes.

Remove the skins and place cooked eggplant in a food processor with garlic, lemon juice, ground cumin, tahini. Process until smooth.

To serve

Take a large plate and spread the baba ganoush or hummus or tzatziki over it, top with torn and massaged kale, herbs and onion slices. Finish with the slices of eggplant, dukkah and microgreens (if using).

Note:

Activated walnuts have been soaked overnight in water then dried in a dehydrator for 24-36 hours until completely dry. We do this to break down the phytates (enzyme inhibitors) and make them more digestible.

If you don't want to activate them you can lightly roast them, being mindful not to burn them as this will damage the delicate oils in the nuts.

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