

Vege Bake/Stack

Sauce Ingredients: (This makes a lot more than you will use for 1 bake, but freezes well)

3 or 4 large brown onions, diced

3 or 4 large cloves garlic

Grapeseed Oil to fry off (or other high flash point oil of your choice, NOT Olive Oil – it burns)

1 to 2 teaspoons smoked paprika (can use ordinary, but the smoked one is nicer)

6 x 400g tins peeled, diced, peeled tomatoes (Aldi have Australian organic ones quite cheap) You could use an equivalent amount fresh Romas if available & peel them if you don't like skins. Do this by cutting a cross on the end and pouring boiling water over them first.)

140g tub tomato paste (helps with lycopene absorption when used with fresh/tinned tomatoes)

Approx 400ml red wine (for the sauce plus whatever you drink while cooking it!)

2 or 3 large bay leaves

1 sprig fresh rosemary (or 1 teaspoon dried)

1 teaspoon cracked black pepper (more if you like a good pepper bite)

1 to 2 tablespoons soft brown sugar (can use raw sugar, but not as rich flavour)

1 – 2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar

1 – 2 teaspoons Tamari (or Soy) sauce (taste for desired saltiness level)

3 to 5 drops Parisian (Browning) Essence (optional for darker colour and strengthens flavour)

1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese (leave out for vegan)

Optional: Whole, small button mushrooms

Method:

Brown onions & garlic in oil

Add smoked paprika & fry off to release flavour

Slowly add tomatoes, 1 tin at a time & bringing back to medium simmer before adding next tin. Not too high heat, or will catch on bottom of saucepan.

After all tins are in, use the red wine to rinse out the cans, stirring reasonably often.

Add the tomato paste, bay leaves, rosemary, pepper, sugar, balsamic & tamari & mushrooms if using them. Stir well.

Lower heat to low simmer with lid off, stirring often, to evaporate excess liquid until nice rich texture & consistency. (The longer this takes, the better the flavour)

Taste. If a little sharp, can add more sugar. (Depends on how acidic the tomatoes are)

When it tastes ready, add the Parisian essence and Parmesan and simmer for another 15 minutes.

Allow to cool, ready for use.

Vege Bake/Stack:

Ingredients: Choose your favourites (but not ones that will mush quickly like broccoli for eg.)

Eggplant; Red onion; Pumpkin; Zucchini; all colours of capsicums; potatoes etc.

Grated cheese (Mixture of Mozzarella, parmesan, tasty & cheddar works best).

Substitute with crumbled tofu if you want to do a vegan version.

Optional: (not vegan though) sliced hard-boiled eggs – really makes it rich & dense! Other option is to use lasagne sheets as well.

Method:

Cut vegies into large slices about the thickness of your finger.

Char grill on BBQ grill on high heat (or hotplate if you don't have a grill section). This is only to create the flavour, so don't cook them all the way through.

If you don't like capsicum skin (it can be a bit fibrous and often burns) then put them into a plastic freezer bag after grilling and close the top over. Let them sit for about ½ hr or longer. Remove from bag and the skins will peel off very easily.

Start by oiling the baking dish and adding a good covering of the sauce.

Build layers of vegies, cheese & sauce (sliced eggs optional) (lasagne style without the pasta).

Top with final layer of sauce, making sure all covered to keep wet whilst cooking.

Sprinkle with layer of grated cheese.

Cover dish & bake in moderate oven 180, until ready. (about 40 mins to 1hr).

Test with skewer, feeling for resistance from potato. Once clear of resistance, it is ready to eat!

Remove cover and brown cheese (can change over to grill setting if desired)

Eat & enjoy with a nice red vino!

Disclaimer: All measurements are approximate and are estimated from memory. I don't use scales or measures, so feel free to play!

© 2013 John Rodriguez