

RUSTIC EGGPLANT-TOMATO BAKE



Makes 6-8 servings

2 or 3 globe eggplants (about 2 pounds total), preferably Rosa Blanca, or 2 pounds Japanese eggplants
6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Kosher or sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 garlic cloves, peeled
1/4 cup mixed chopped fresh herbs, such as Italian parsley, rosemary, basil, and thyme
6 to 8 small, ripe red tomatoes, such as Early Girl or Celebrity (about 1 1/2 pounds total)

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. If eggplants are large, cut in half lengthwise. Cut eggplant halves or whole Japanese eggplants crosswise into 1/2-inch-thick slices. Drizzle 2 tablespoons of the oil over the bottom of a shallow 2-quart baking dish. Arrange the eggplant slices, overlapping them, in a single layer in the prepared dish, and season with salt and pepper. Put the garlic cloves through a garlic press

directly into a small bowl. Add the herbs, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and enough oil to make a stiff paste. Dot the eggplant with the garlic-herb mixture. Core the tomatoes, cut them in half crosswise, and salt the cut sides. Place the tomato halves cut-side-down spaced evenly over the eggplant. Drizzle the remaining olive oil evenly over all, and sprinkle the tomatoes with a little salt.

Bake in the upper third of the oven, basting occasionally with the juices that collect in the dish, until the eggplant is tender and the tomatoes are soft and blackened on top, about 1 hour. Serve warm or at room temperature.

From ["The Santa Monica Farmers' Market Cookbook"](#) by Amelia Saltsman, Blenheim Press © 2007