

Involtini

Italian for various small bites of food consisting of some sort of outer layer wrapped around a filling.

Serves 6

1hr 20 min

- 3 **eggplants**, about 450 g each, trimmed and cut lengthwise into slices 6-mm thick (about 16 slices total)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ C **olive oil**, or as needed
- 226 g **feta cheese**, crumbled (**ricotta** or **cottage cheese**)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ C **pine nuts**
- $\frac{1}{3}$ C **raisins**, soaked in hot water for 10 minutes until plump, then drained
- 59 ml extra virgin **olive oil**, more for drizzling
- 2 T **bread crumbs**
- 1 **garlic** clove, peeled and minced
- Finely grated zest of 1 **lemon**
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp **dried mint**
- 2 T chopped Italian **parsley** leaves
- 1 large **egg**, beaten
- Salt and freshly ground black **pepper**
- 640 g drained canned **crushed tomatoes**
- 1 large ball fresh **mozzarella** in 1/4-inch slices



1. Heat oven to **190°C**. Place a ridged cast-iron skillet or other heavy skillet over medium-high heat.
2. Working in batches, brush **eggplant** slices on both sides with **olive oil** and cook, turning, until soft and (if using a ridged pan) crisscrossed with grid marks. Set aside and allow to cool.
3. In a large bowl, combine **feta**, **pine nuts**, **raisins**, **59 ml extra virgin olive oil**, **bread crumbs**, **garlic**, **lemon zest**, **mint** and **parsley**.
4. Mix in **egg**, and season to taste with **salt** and **pepper**.
5. Spread **eggplant** slices on a surface, and divide stuffing evenly among them, placing 1 to 2 T at one end of each slice. Roll up slices tightly to secure filling, and place in a 33 cm x 23 cm baking dish (or other shallow baking pan in which rolls fit snugly in a single layer).
 - *Instead of rolling up eggplant, just layer on top like for lasagna*
6. Pour crushed **tomatoes** on top of eggplant rolls.
7. Arrange **mozzarella** slices in a line lengthwise down center of pan.
8. Drizzle **olive oil** evenly over pan, and season to taste with **salt** and **pepper**.
9. Bake until cheese has melted and eggplant is bubbling and fragrant, **25 to 30 minutes**. Remove from heat and **allow to stand 5 to 10 minutes**. Serve hot.