Zucchini Rice Gratin

Description

It's hearty and very fall/winter-ish; it would be great on a Thanksgiving table. It involves wild rice, greens, caramelized onions, a nutty cheese and breadcrumbs and it makes a spectacular amount of gratin. When we make it at home, we reheat it for a few nights as a dinner side-dish and everyone inhales it. It's warm and filling and I hope you will love it too.

Summary

Yield: 6
Prep Time: 1 hour
Category: Vegetables
Cuisine: American
Tags: Football Thanksgiving

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup white rice long grain
- 5 tbsp olive oil
- 1 1/2 lb zucchini about 3 medium sliced 1/4 inch thick
- 1/2 lb plum Tomatoes sliced 1/4 inch thick
- 1 medium onion halved lengthwise and thinly sliced
- 3 clove garlic minced
- 2 large eggs beaten
- 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves chopped
- 1/2 cup grated parm cheese

Instructions

Preheat oven to 450°F.

Cook the rice according to your favorite method. The package directions work in some cases, but check my notes above about adjustments I find I have to make. If you cook the rice in a large, wide-ish covered skillet, it might cook even faster but you'll have the chance to use it again (and save on dirty dishes) when you need to cook the onions in a bit.

While rice cooks, coat two large (or, if you have the same pitifully small oven as I do, three smaller) baking sheets each with a tablespoon of a of olive oil (a bit less for smaller pans).

Spread zucchini and tomato slices on the baking sheets in as close to a single layer as you can.

Sprinkle with 1/2 teaspoon salt and a few grinds of black pepper.

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Roast tomatoes for 10 minutes and zucchini for 20.

Flip zucchini halfway through; it's not worth the messy effort for the tomatoes. Leave oven on.

Heat large, heavy skillet (such as the one you used to cook your rice) over medium heat.

Once hot, add 2 tablespoons olive oil, heat oil, then add onions, garlic and 1/4 teaspoon salt to pan.

Cover and reduce heat to low, cooking onion until limp and tender, about 15 to 20 minutes. Stir occasionally.

Combine onion mixture, rice, eggs, thyme, half of your grated cheese and a half-tablespoon of olive oil in a bowl.

Add a good amount of freshly ground black pepper.

Use the remaining half-tablespoon of olive oil to coat a shallow 2-quart baking dish.

Spread half of rice mixture in bottom of dish.

Arrange half of roasted zucchini on top.

Spread remaining rice mixture over it and please don't worry about being neat about this; dinner will be "rustic" tonight!

Arrange remaining zucchini on top, then tomato slices.

Sprinkle with remaining grated cheese and bake until set and golden brown, about 20 minutes.

Each oven varies, but I find mine does the very best browning when the dish is on a rack near the top of the oven.