

Caponata

Eggplant Appetizer

5 tablespoons olive oil
1 1 1/2-pound eggplant, unpeeled, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
1 medium onion, cubed
4 large garlic cloves, chopped
1 14 1/2-ounce can diced tomatoes with Italian seasonings in juice
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
2 tablespoons drained capers
1/3 cup chopped fresh basil
Toasted pine nuts

Heat oil in heavy large pot over medium heat. Add eggplant, onion, and garlic cloves. Sauté until eggplant is soft and brown, about 15 minutes. Add diced tomatoes with juice, then red wine vinegar and drained capers. Cover and simmer until eggplant and onion are very tender, stirring occasionally, about 12 minutes. Season caponata to taste with salt and pepper. Mix in fresh basil. Transfer caponata to serving bowl. Sprinkle with toasted pine nuts. Serve warm, at room temperature, or cold. (Caponata can be made 2 days ahead. Cover and chill.)

variations - add green olives, celery and/or 1 tblspn of sugar - omit fresh basil if using green olives.

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