

## **Baked Eggplant Ricotta Stack** from *Urban Sacred Garden*



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This time of the Summer, garden fresh Eggplant and Tomatoes are growing in abundance. If you grow your own, Eggplant can be a challenging vegetable to use sometimes but, when done right, is heavenly. The key to tasty Eggplant, regardless of the use, is to “sweat” the Eggplant with salt to release the bitter tasting juices. What is left is a tender, tasty veggie that is one of my personal favorites in Italian dishes. So get in the kitchen, start sweating and eat up!

Yield: About 5-6 stacks (depending on size of Eggplant and Tomato)

### **INGREDIENTS**

- 1 Medium Eggplant, cut into 1/4 inch slices
- 1 Large Tomato, Sliced
- 1 Cup Ricotta Cheese
- 1/2 Cup Parmesan Cheese
- 1/3 Cup Italian Seasoned Bread Crumbs
- 2 Tbsp Fresh Oregano, chopped
- 2 Tbsp Fresh Chives, chopped
- 4 Tbsp Fresh Basil, chopped
- 2 Tbsp Garlic, chopped
- 2 Tbsp Olive Oil
- 3 Cups Fresh Tomato Sauce

### **DIRECTIONS**

1. Place sliced Eggplant in a colander in the sink and coat thoroughly with table Salt. Allow to “sweat” for about 30 minutes then rinse off salt. (This keeps the Eggplant from being bitter.) Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Place Eggplant in a single layer on a baking sheet and lightly drizzle with Olive Oil. Cook for about 10 minutes to begin softening. Remove from oven.
3. In a small bowl combine Ricotta, Parmesan, Bread Crumbs, Oregano, Basil, Chives and Garlic. Mix thoroughly.
3. Coat the bottom of a glass baking dish with 1 Cup of the Tomato Sauce, Layer the ingredients in stacks as follows: 1 Slice Eggplant, thick slather of Ricotta filling, 1 Slice Tomato, another slather of Ricotta filling, 1 more slice Eggplant. Continue to make these stacks in the pan until you run out of ingredients. Cover Stacks with remaining 2 Cups of Tomato Sauce.
5. Bake in preheated oven for about 30 minutes or until Eggplant and filling are cooked through, and sauce bubbles for a about 10 minutes. Serve hot. Enjoy!