

# Cooking

## Eggplant, Lamb and Yogurt Casserole

By Yotam Ottolenghi

**YIELD** 4 to 6 servings

**TIME** 2 hours

This hearty dish is inspired by moussaka, but simpler to prepare. Everything is baked in one roasting pan, with the different elements added in stages. Made with yogurt, cheese and egg, the topping cuts wonderfully through the richness of the eggplant and lamb, even though it lacks the body of béchamel. If you can get them, sweet and properly ripened tomatoes would be better than the canned ones. This is best served with a piece of pita or a slice of white bread to scoop it all up.

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### INGREDIENTS

FOR THE EGGPLANT AND LAMB MIXTURE:

**2 or 3 eggplants (aubergines) (about 1 1/2 pounds/680 grams), cut into 1-inch/3-centimeter cubes**

**1 pound/450 grams ground lamb (lamb mince)**

**1 medium onion, halved and thinly sliced**

**½ cup/15 grams fresh oregano leaves, roughly chopped**

**⅓ cup/80 milliliters olive oil**

**¼ cup/65 grams tomato paste**

**6 garlic cloves, thinly sliced**

**1 tablespoon ground cinnamon**

**2 teaspoons ground allspice**

**½ teaspoon red-pepper flakes**

**Kosher salt and black pepper**

**1 (14-ounce/400-gram) can whole, peeled plum tomatoes with their juices**

### PREPARATION

#### Step 1

Heat the oven to 450 degrees Fahrenheit/240 degrees Celsius.

#### Step 2

Add the eggplant, lamb, onion, oregano, oil, tomato paste, garlic, cinnamon, allspice, red-pepper flakes, 1 3/4 teaspoons salt and a good grind of pepper to a 10-by-13-inch/26-by-34-centimeter (or similar) roasting pan (tin) and mix well to combine. Bake until the mixture is well browned, stirring twice throughout and breaking apart the meat with a spoon, 30 to 35 minutes.

#### Step 3

Remove from the oven and continue to break apart the meat very well (don't worry if you break apart some of the eggplant, too). Add the canned tomatoes with their juices, lightly crushing the tomatoes by hand. Stir in the chicken stock and parsley then return to the oven and bake for another 35 minutes, stirring twice throughout, until the sauce is thick and rich and the eggplant is very soft. Remove from the oven and turn the oven temperature up to 475 degrees Fahrenheit/250 degrees Celsius.

#### Step 4

While the casserole is in the oven, prepare the topping: Whisk together the yogurt, yolks, flour, garlic and half the Parmesan with 1/4 teaspoon salt and a good grind of pepper. Once ready, spoon the yogurt mixture over the lamb and eggplant, gently spreading to cover. Top evenly with the remaining

**3 cups/700 milliliters chicken stock**  
**⅓ cup/20 grams roughly chopped flat-leaf parsley**

FOR THE TOPPING:

**2 cups/450 grams plain Greek yogurt**  
**3 large egg yolks**  
**1 ½ tablespoons all-purpose (plain) flour**  
**2 garlic cloves, minced**  
**2 lightly packed cups/70 grams finely grated Parmesan**  
**1 cup/100 grams roughly crumbled feta**  
**Scant 1/3 cup/40 grams pine nuts**  
**2 packed tablespoons roughly chopped flat-leaf parsley**  
**¼ teaspoon red-pepper flakes**

Parmesan, feta, pine nuts, parsley and red-pepper flakes.

### Step 5

Bake until golden and bubbling, 15 to 20 minutes. Let cool for about 15 minutes before serving.

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### PRIVATE NOTES

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