



Ratatouille

serves 4 as a side dish

- 6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup diced sweet onion or shallot
- 4 large cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 2 medium Japanese eggplants, in 1" cubes
- 1 large zucchini, in 1" cubes
- 1/2 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh marjoram
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil, plus more for garnish
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/4 teaspoon red chile flakes
- 1 tablespoon fennel pollen
- 2 teaspoons red wine vinegar or lemon juice

In a large, heavy skillet, warm olive oil over medium heat. Add onion or shallot, minced garlic and 1/2 teaspoon sea salt and sauté, stirring frequently, until very soft and golden, about 15 minutes. Add eggplant and zucchini and cook for 10 minutes before stirring in tomatoes, herbs, chile flakes and fennel pollen. Stir to coat everything well in the olive oil, lower heat and gently cook until vegetables are all quite soft, about 20 minutes more.

Cool slightly, then taste and adjust seasoning, adding more salt, freshly ground black pepper, and vinegar or lemon juice as desired.

To serve, remove and discard the bay leaf, swirl in a little more olive oil and garnish with chopped fresh basil.