

RATATOUILLE

We're big Pixar fans in our house, so when the movie *Ratatouille* came out, I wanted to figure out how to re-create the famous dish Remy makes for that harshest of food critics, Anton Ego. Although *ratatouille* is actually a very simple comfort dish made with whatever vegetables come from the garden, the addition of certain flavors as well as the presentation can turn this simple dish into a masterpiece.

Traditional ratatouille is made with a tomato base, but I make mine with a cauliflower puree instead, helping to keep the acidity down and my esophagus happy.

CAULIFLOWER PUREE INGREDIENTS

- 1 head of cauliflower, rough chop
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 3 shallots, rough chop
- 2 gloves of garlic, rough chop
- 1 cup of chicken broth or bone broth
- Salt and pepper to taste

RATATOUILLE INGREDIENTS

- 2 Japanese Eggplants
- 6 Roma Tomatoes
- 2 Yellow Squash
- 2 Zucchini

(When buying the vegetables, try to get them as close in size width-wise as possible.)

DRESSING INGREDIENTS

4 tablespoons of olive oil
2 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped
2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
1 tablespoon fresh chives, chopped
2 cloves of garlic, minced
Salt and pepper to taste

CAULIFLOWER PUREE PREPARATION

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Rough chop the head of cauliflower. In a large bowl, add the cauliflower, drizzle with olive oil, salt and pepper, and mix to combine. Pour cauliflower onto a baking dish and roast for 45 minutes.

In a large pot, sauté shallots until translucent. Add in garlic and sauté for an additional minute. Add in roasted cauliflower and the broth, bring to a boil, then lower heat and simmer for 20 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Allow to cool, then using an emersion blender, combine until pureed. Set aside.

RATATOUILLE PREPARATION

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Slice up eggplant, tomatoes, squash and zucchini into 1/8-inch rounds and set aside.

Pour 2 cups of the puree into the base of a 12" round deep pie pan. Arrange the sliced vegetables on top of the puree in a circular pattern, alternating between them, (one zucchini, followed by one tomato, followed by one yellow squash, followed by one Japanese eggplant, overlapping each). Start from the outer edge, working in. (It's okay if you don't use all the vegetables you've sliced.) Season with salt and pepper.

In a small bowl, mix all of the dressing ingredients together and pour over the vegetables.

Cover the pan with aluminum foil and bake for 35 – 40 minutes. Remove the tin foil and continue to bake for another 15-20 minutes. Best served while hot.

Serves 6-8