

08/22/10 - Stuffed Zucchini, Kalavassas Yenas



Zucchini, zucchini, everywhere, in the farm market, in the backyard; they come in every size and shape. Some have different names or colors but they are all delectable little squash that can be sautéed, baked, grilled, stuffed, and shredded. I like my zucchini sliced and sautéed with mushrooms, layered into vegetable lasagna, baked in a quajado and fried in a pancake. One of my favorite dishes from childhood is stuffed zucchini.

My mom, Nona, has always been ahead of her time and as she approaches her 92nd birthday I realize that she knew about purchasing fresh and local when we were children.

A firm believer in sustainability, she composted in our back yard in the 1950's and 60's. In the very back of the yard we had a large compost pile where she tossed all the vegetable peelings and fruit remains. Many years, a zucchini plant sprouted out of the compost in the spring and by summer a huge curving vine snaked its way down the garden path filled with zucchini and the delicious flowers.

Try making this stuffed zucchini dish and you will love it. It is mild in flavor but you could spice it up if you prefer. Serve this with rice and you have a meal.

8 medium zucchini

2 pounds of ground beef

½ cup of long grain rice

½ teaspoon salt

Fresh ground pepper

1/3 cup chopped fresh parsley

4 tablespoons of olive oil

2 tablespoons of sugar



1 28 ounce can of chopped tomatoes (Try San Marzano variety) Wash and dry the zucchini, then trim the tips. Cut the zucchini in half. Using a coring device, I think Nona called it a kavacador, hollow out the centers leaving tubes to stuff. Chop up the zucchini pulp from the centers and save it to add to the sauce.

Mix the ground beef with the rice, salt, pepper and chopped parsley. Gently stuff

the zucchini tubes with the ground beef. Add the olive oil to a preheated Dutch oven. Add the sugar and wait a moment for the sugar to begin to turn light caramel. At that point add the zucchini tubes and sauté for a couple of minutes taking care not to let the sugar burn. Next add all of the reserved zucchini pulp that you removed from



Lastly add the chopped tomatoes and bring the zucchini and sauce to a simmer. Cover the stuffed zucchini and let them simmer for an hour and a half. This can easily be refrigerated.





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