

Eggplant Steak with Chickpeas, Sun Dried Tomatoes, Feta Cheese and Black Olives

Serves 4

This inventive recipe with its bold flavours evokes images of the Mediterranean.

Ingredients:

- Balsamic Marinade (see recipe)
- 1 large eggplant, about 1 lb.
- 1 ½ cups chickpeas, drained
- 2 medium-sized tomatoes, roasted, peeled, seeded and cubed (substitute sun dried in oil)
- ¼ lb. feta cheese, cubed or crumbled
- ½ cup pitted black olives, preferably Greek or Moroccan
- 2 Tbs. chopped fresh oregano or Italian parsley
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 4 (6½-inch round) pita breads
- 4 tsp. balsamic vinegar
- 1 bunch fresh oregano as garnish

Balsamic Marinade

- 1 Tbs. balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tbs. tamari soy sauce
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 2 Tbs. olive oil

Directions:

1. To make marinade, combine ingredients, slowly adding olive oil and stirring briskly to combine well. Set aside.
2. Preheat grill or broiler.
3. Cut eggplant lengthwise into four ½-inch-thick slices to resemble steaks. Sprinkle salt to draw out moisture, about 10 minutes. Brush “steaks” with olive oil.
4. Grill or broil eggplant for 2 minutes on each side, or until tender but not soft. Remove from heat and place 1 steak on each serving plate.
5. Place chickpeas, tomatoes, feta, black olives and oregano in small bowl. Season to taste with salt and pepper, and stir to combine well. Add some marinade and stir again. Toast or grill pita bread and cut into pie-shaped wedges and set aside.
6. Spoon 1 or 2 scoops of pepper-olive mixture on eggplant steak with some mixture pooling onto plate. Sprinkle with balsamic vinegar, place several pita wedges on plate and garnish eggplant with several sprigs fresh oregano. Repeat with remaining ingredients until used up, making sure pepper-olive mixture spills over top of eggplant and onto plate. Serve immediately.

From the kitchen of Chef Leo Pantel

Executive Chef at the Conexus Arts Centre

