

# Greek Mousakka

Moussaka is a traditional Greek recipe. And as with most "traditional" recipes, there are as many ways to cook it as there are cooks but here are some basics that they all share. The main ingredient in a Moussaka is eggplant. Eggplant that is layered with a tomato meat sauce and topped with a melt in your mouth Bechamel sauce. Don't let that fancy word scare you off. It's really just a version of a cheese sauce. And it tops this moussaka like a golden crown on the king.

## INGREDIENTS

A very quick version can use already prepared pasta sauce instead of the meat sauce with added cinnamon.

1 Eggplant cut into 2" dice. Skin on. Use the big eggplants, not the skinny Japanese ones. If using the Japanese ones, then use 5 or so and cut into slices.\*

Meat sauce:

1 lb of ground beef

1 onion chopped

2 T of tomato paste

1/2 C. red wine

1 T. Ground Cinnamon

2 T. dry Oregano Salt and pepper to taste

2 T. Vegetable oil

Cottage Cheese White Sauce:

1 stick of butter (1/2 C.)

6 T. All purpose flour

1 qt. milk

4 eggs, well beaten

1/4 t. nutmeg 1

C. Cottage Cheese

1 C. bread crumbs (dry not fresh)

1 C. Parmesan cheese



Instructions:  6-8 servings  45 minutes

Place diced eggplant in a bowl and toss with a sprinkle of oil and a 1/2 tsp of salt. Place on a sheet pan and bake in the oven at 375 degrees for about 25 minutes until slightly browned and turn over and bake for another 10 minutes until eggplant is soft. Save for the assembly.

Prepare meat sauce. Fry ground beef in 2 T. of vegetable oil until browned. Add onions and continue cooking until onions are soft. Add tomato paste and cook until paste is darkened red-brown. Add red wine, cinnamon, oregano, and water if the 2. 3. 4. sauce is too thick. Add salt and pepper to taste. Save for the assembly

Prepare cottage cheese white sauce. Add butter to the saucepan and melt. Add flour and whisk until the flour is combined with the butter and there is not dry flour. Add the milk gradually while whisking until the consistency is a thick cream-like consistency. Cool this sauce. Then add the eggs, nutmeg, and cottage cheese and mix until well incorporated.

Assemble the dish. Sprinkle some bread crumbs in the bottom of a casserole dish. Add 1/2 the eggplant. Add 1/2 the meat sauce. Sprinkle with bread crumbs and Parmesan cheese. Repeat with eggplant and meat sauce and bread crumbs and Parmesan cheese. Pour the cottage cheese white sauce over the top of the meat and bake at 375 degrees for 1 hour until the top is golden. Remove from the oven and allow to cool for 20-30 minutes before serving.

\*Notes: The authentic recipes call for slices of the eggplant, but I find that those slices make serving the moussaka difficult because the slices sometimes come out whole when cutting out a serving because the skin is tough.

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# Gazpacho

Gazpacho is a Spanish chilled soup with ripe, fresh tomatoes, cucumber, bell pepper, celery, and onions. Make a refreshing batch to use up garden vegetables during the hottest days of the year.



## INGREDIENTS

4 slices of white bread, dry or fresh  
2 garlic cloves  
2 pounds ripe tomatoes, seeded  
1 bell pepper  
1 cucumber, peeled and seeded  
1/4 t. ground cumin  
2 t. salt  
1/3 C. olive oil  
2 T. red wine vinegar or apple cider vinegar



**Instructions:**  6 servings  30 minutes

Soak bread in water to soften if dry, it may take 15 minutes.  
Squeeze out the excess water from the bread.

Add all the ingredients to a blender and blend until very smooth.  
Taste for salt and pepper.

Place in refrigerator overnight.

**Serving instructions:**

This is traditionally served cold. May scatter chopped parsley over each serving. Note: For a nice addition.

Sear scallops, 1 for each bowl.

Place soup in bowl.

Place scallop in center of bowl.

Scatter dry chive blossoms around and a few drops of olive oil.



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