

Islim Kebabi

(Eggplant-Wrapped Meatballs)

2 lb eggplant, washed
1 green bell pepper, cut in bite sizes
3-4 medium tomatoes, sliced round
1 cup vegetable/canola oil for frying
Tooth picks

For the Meatloaf:

1 lb ground beef
1 egg
1 onion, chopped finely
5 tsp bread crumbs

3 tsp olive oil
1 tsp salt to taste
½ tsp black pepper
½ tsp paprika

For the sauce:

1 tsp tomato paste
A pinch of salt and sugar to taste
1 cup warm water

Wash and peel the eggplants in strip shapes or totally. Slice them lengthwise 1/3 inch thick. In a frying pan, fry both sides of eggplant slices lightly. Leave aside.

In a bowl, combine all of the meatloaf ingredients and knead with your hands till the mixture gets thick. Then, grab plum size pieces and round them in your palms. Preheat the oven to 400 F. Place the meatballs in a Pyrex Dish and bake for 15-18 minutes till they are cooked. Take out and let them cool.

Place two eggplant slices perpendicular to each other like a cross. Then, place the meatball in the middle and wrap it with the eggplant slices. Place one slice of tomato and pepper on top of wrapped meatball and secure them with a toothpick. Repeat this steps for all the meatballs. Place all of the wrapped meatballs in a baking dish. Take 1 tbsp of tomato paste and 1 cup of boiling water in a mixing bowl and whisk. Pour it in from the edges of baking dish. Preheat oven to 450F and bake until the tomato slices are soft.