**KRYSTAL’S VEGGIE SURPRISE**

The inspiration for the dish was to try and make a warm, healthy and filling dish, very colourful, making it more appealing for everyone to try.

**INGREDIENTS**

2 medium eggplant, diced into 1/2" pieces kosher salt

2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided freshly ground black pepper

1 large onion, chopped

2 bell peppers, cut into 1/4" spears

1 bay leaf

1 tbsp. Tomato paste

1/2 c. Vegetable stock

2 zucchinis, sliced into 1/4 " coins

3 cloves garlic

2 halved cherry tomatoes

1 tsp. dried oregano

1 pinch of crushed red pepper flakes

Bunch of fresh basil

Crusty baguette (for serving)

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Place eggplant in a colander and toss with a big pinch of salt. Let sit for about 20 minutes, then pat the eggplant dry to remove excess moisture.
2. In a large pot, heat 1 tablespoon oil. Add eggplant and season with salt and pepper. Cook until golden all over, about 6 minutes, then remove the eggplant.
3. Add remaining tablespoon of oil to pot. Add onion, bell peppers and bay leaf and cook, stirring occasionally, until onion and peppers are beginning to turn tender, about 5 minutes.
4. Add tomato paste and stir until it’s fragrant, about 1 minute, then deglaze the pan with the vegetable stock and reduce until most of the liquid has evaporated. Stir in zucchini and cook until tender, about 4 minutes more. Stir in garlic, cherry tomatoes and oregano.
5. Season mixture with red pepper flakes optional, salt and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until the tomatoes start to break down.
6. Add the eggplant back to the pot and stir to combine. Garnish with basil and serve warm or at room temperature with baguette.

