



Mediterranean Rice and Vegetable Bake

(makes 4 servings)

This dish is a real feast of vegetables but also rich in protein, good fats and starch making it a beautifully-balanced and satisfying meal. It is also great cold alongside a generous mixed, dressed green salad.

Ingredients

1½ tablespoons avocado oil
1 medium onion, peeled and finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
1 medium red pepper, deseeded and diced
1 medium yellow pepper, deseeded and diced
1 small red chilli, deseeded and very finely diced
2 medium courgette/zucchini, washed and diced (small dice)
3 tablespoons fresh parsley leaves, finely chopped
1 tablespoon fresh basil leaves, finely chopped
1 teaspoon dried oregano or marjoram
200g cooked brown rice
150g ricotta cheese
150g feta cheese, crumbled
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
Sea salt
Freshly ground black pepper
6 medium tomatoes, sliced
10 black olives, stoned and halved

Method

Preheat the oven to 190C/375F/Gas Mark 5 and place a non-stick baking dish on the middle shelf.

Heat the oil in a sauté pan over a medium heat, add the onion, garlic, peppers and chilli, stir well, turn the heat to very low, put a lid on the pan and sauté for around 10 minutes or until the vegetables are cooked through..

Remove the pan from the heat, stir in the courgette/zucchini and herbs and set aside.

Place the rice, ricotta, feta and lemon juice in a bowl and mix well. Add the vegetables from the pan and continue mixing gently until everything is incorporated.

Season to taste and turn the mixture into the heated baking dish, smoothing the surface flat before topping with the tomato slices (slightly overlap them), sprinkling the olive halves over evenly and returning to the oven for 35-45 minutes or until everything is piping hot.

If you wish, you can then place the dish under the grill for a further 5 minutes to slightly crisp the edges of the tomatoes.