

Caponata

Author: Cookie and Kate Prep Time: 20 minutes Cook Time: 40 minutes Total Time: 1 hour
Yield: 6 side servings 1x Category: Appetizer or side dish Method: Cooked Cuisine: Sicilian
Diet: Vegetarian
5 from 62 reviews

Learn how to make homemade caponata with this recipe! This boldly flavored Sicilian appetizer or side dish is perfect for late summer meals. Recipe yields about 6 side servings.



SCALE 1x 2x 3x

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large or 2 smallish eggplants (about 1 3/4 pounds), cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1/2 teaspoon fine salt, divided, to taste
- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 2 celery stalks, thinly sliced
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 cloves garlic, pressed or minced
- 1 can (14 ounces) crushed fire-roasted tomatoes
- 1/4 cup pitted green olives (ideally Castelvetrano), roughly chopped
- 1/4 cup raisins, red or golden
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar or white wine vinegar, to taste
- 2 tablespoons capers, drained
- 1 tablespoon honey or sugar, to taste

- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes, to taste
- 1 bay leaf
- ¼ cup chopped fresh mint, flat-leaf parsley and/or basil
- Homemade Crostini, optional, for serving

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INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit. Line a large, rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper to prevent the eggplant from sticking to it.
2. Place the cubed eggplant on the prepared pan. Sprinkle it with ¼ teaspoon of the salt, drizzle with 3 tablespoons olive oil, and promptly toss to coat (some of the eggplant pieces will be more saturated with oil than the others, and that's ok). Roast the eggplant in the oven for 30 to 35 minutes, stirring halfway, until deeply golden.
3. In the meantime, warm the remaining tablespoon of olive oil in a medium Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion, bell pepper and celery. Season with the remaining ¼ teaspoon salt and about 10 twists of black pepper. Cook until the onions are tender and just starting to turn golden, about 9 to 12 minutes, stirring often.
4. Add the garlic and stir until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the tomatoes and stir to combine. Add the olives, raisins, vinegar, capers, honey, red pepper flakes, and bay leaf. Stir to combine. Simmer on medium-low heat for 10 minutes or so, stirring occasionally.
5. Remove and discard the bay leaf. Stir in the roasted eggplant and cook for another 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in most of the fresh herbs, reserving a small handful for garnish. Remove the pot from the heat.
6. Adjust to taste to find your desired balance of tangy-sweet-spicy-salty. Add more vinegar (by the tablespoon), honey (by the teaspoon), red pepper flakes (I like at least ¼ teaspoon more, but I like spice), and/or salt (for more overall flavor). Transfer it to a serving bowl and top with the remaining herbs.
7. For best flavor, allow the caponata to rest at room temperature for an hour, or longer in the refrigerator. Serve warm or at room temperature (some even enjoy it chilled), with crostini if

desired. Caponata will keep for about 5 days, covered, in the fridge. I suspect it would freeze well for several months, too.

NOTES

Change it up: Aside from the eggplant and tomatoes, the vegetables here are flexible—you could add an extra bell pepper or omit the bell pepper entirely. You could add some carrot or zucchini or yellow squash. If you don't like raisins, leave them out. Not all caponata recipes call for them, anyway. You might enjoy pine nuts sprinkled on top, which is another regional variation.

Make it vegan: Substitute sugar for the honey.

Make it gluten free: This dish is gluten free, as long as you serve it with gluten-free accompaniments.

▸ NUTRITION INFORMATION

Did you make this recipe?

Please let me know how it turned out for you! Leave a comment below and share a picture on Instagram with the hashtag #cookieandkate.

Recipe from Cookie and Kate: <https://cookieandkate.com/caponata-recipe/>