

# PROVENÇAL STUFFED COURGETTES

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Serves 4 as a side or 2 as a main

## INGREDIENTS:

- 4 medium round courgettes or 2 large long ones
- 2 tbsp olive oil, plus a little extra
- 1 onion, peeled and finely chopped
- 2 medium, ripe tomatoes
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
- 80g long-grain rice
- 150ml vegetable (or chicken) stock
- 1 large bunch fresh mint
- 50g finely grated parmesan
- Salt and black pepper
- 2 tbsp dry breadcrumbs
- Basil, to garnish

## DIRECTIONS

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1. Heat the oven to 180C/350F/gas 4. Cut the tops off the courgettes and scoop out the flesh with a spoon or melon baller, taking care to leave sturdy walls around the outside. Roughly chop the flesh, along with the lids.
2. Bring a large pan of salted water to a simmer, add the courgettes and blanch for five minutes. In the meantime, prepare a sink full of iced water and, once the courgettes are done, scoop them out of the pan and into the sink to cool down (this will help keep them nice and green).
3. Heat the oil in a wide pan over a medium-low heat, add the onion, and cook until soft and golden.
4. Cut the tomatoes in half, scoop out and discard the watery seeds, then finely chop the flesh. Add to the pan with the courgette flesh and garlic, cook until soft, then stir in the rice, add the stock, bring to a simmer and cook for about 12 minutes, until most of the liquid has evaporated. Meanwhile, pick and roughly chop the mint leaves.
5. Stir the parmesan and mint into the stuffing mix and season to taste. Put the hollowed-out courgettes on a greased baking sheet and divide the filling between them, packing it in well, then cover with foil and bake for 20 minutes.
6. Stir the parmesan and mint into the stuffing mix.
7. Toss the breadcrumbs in a splash of olive oil, season, sprinkle on top of the courgettes, and bake for a further 15 minutes. Tear a few basil leaves over the top before serving.