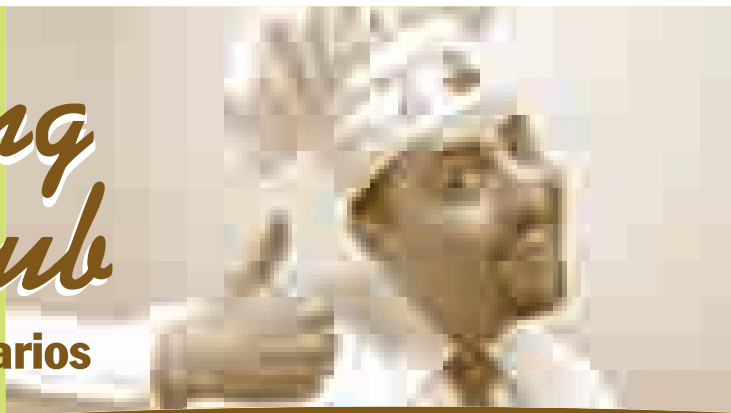


Cooking with the Club

by Chef Robert Larios

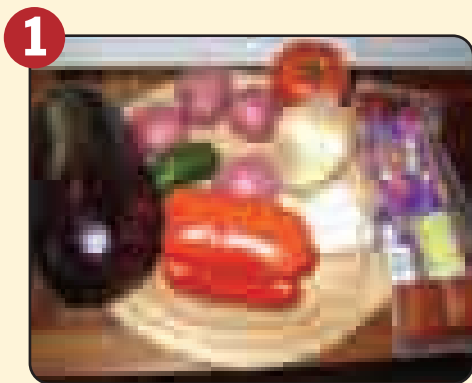


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Ratatouille a la Soy? Sacre Bleu!

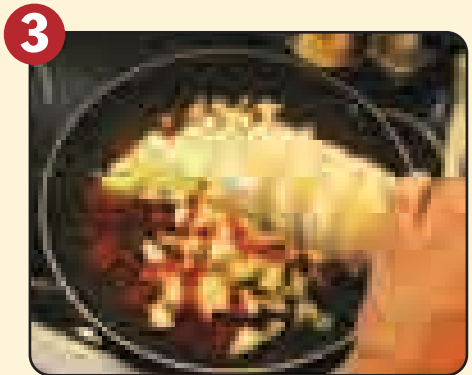
DIRECTIONS:



1 Have your ingredients ready: wash and dry.



2 Cut the two ends of the eggplant and then slice the dark skin, cutting as close to the dark eggplant skin as possible. Dice the eggplant into cubes.



3 Add the soy chorizo, diced rose potatoes, diced onion, minced garlic and diced eggplant, and then add a pinch of sea salt and pepper to pan on medium heat. Cook for about 5 minutes or until golden brown.



4 Now add the diced jalapeño and tomato.



5 Dice the tofu into cubes or squares and add to the already cooking ingredients. Gently stir with a wooden spoon.



6 Allow the ingredients to cook, stirring occasionally. Add parsley (dry is okay).



7 Add the grated Parmesan and turn off stove heat.



8 Plate and serve.

Here comes a soy recipe! Full-flavored, it's my version of ratatouille but with soy ingredients. Ratatouille is a classic French dish using vegetables and olive oil. And yes, I do use vegetables and olive oil. But I also incorporate tofu and soy chorizo to heighten taste and prove that vegetarian recipes can be as delicious as all other recipes.

Tofu is readily available at most supermarkets in the refrigerated section. The same goes for soy chorizo, and it really does taste like real chorizo sausage. Try it with eggs to make a classic Mexican dish called *buevos rancheros*. (Ask politely and I just may cook it for a future edition of *Cooking with the Club*.) I've mentioned in the ingredients list to purchase a harder or firmer tofu, since the softer varieties will fall apart in the cooking process.

I'm guessing French chefs are calling for my resignation since I've gone astray from the traditional ratatouille recipe, but I'm sure they would think I require more than a resignation since I've added a jalapeño and Parmesan cheese, too. But I believe these ingredients help to intensify the flavors of the ratatouille.

Ratatouille a la Soy

Serves 3 to 6

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 eggplant
- 1 red pepper
- 1 jalapeño
- 4 medium rose potatoes
- 1 medium onion
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1 medium tomato
- 6 ounces soy chorizo
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup of tofu, firm density
- Sea salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons parsley

Cooking Tidbit: Feel free to add, remove or substitute the vegetables used. For example, you could add zucchini or remove the potatoes from the recipe.



[A Cook's Dictionary]

Ratatouille:

A popular dish from the French region of Provence that combines eggplant, tomatoes, onions, bell peppers, zucchini, garlic and herbs – all simmered in olive oil. The vegetables can vary according to the cook. They can be cooked together, or cooked separately and then combined and heated briefly together. Ratatouille can be served hot, cold or at room temperature, either as a side dish or as an appetizer with bread or crackers.

– From the *The New Food Lover's Companion*, Sharon Tyler Herbst, 1995, Barron's Educational Series.