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Herb Marinated Grilled Vegetables with a Balsamic Sauce

Ever wonder what to do with all those fragrant herbs you see at the farmers' market or have in your own garden? This recipe uses plenty of them in an easy to make marinade that will bring your summer veggies to a whole new level of delicious. Even the meat eaters in the group will ask for seconds!

Two eggplants
Two medium zucchinis
Two medium yellow squashes
4 red bell peppers (can substitute yellow or orange ones)

Cut the eggplants, zucchini, and squash into ½ inch thick slices (don't peel them).

Core the bell peppers and cut them into quarters.

Place the cut vegetables in a large non-reactive bowl. Set aside while you make the marinade.

To make the **Marinade**, combine the following ingredients in a medium sized bowl and stir until well blended:

2 cups olive oil
½ cup balsamic vinegar
½ cup garlic, minced
¼ cup basil, fresh, minced
¼ cup thyme, fresh
¼ cup tarragon, fresh
¼ cup oregano, fresh
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste.

Pour the marinade over the vegetables and let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes while you make the **Balsamic Sauce** by combining 2 cups of balsamic vinegar with 1/3 cup local honey in a small heavy bottom saucepan. Cook over medium low heat, stirring often to reduce the chance of burning it, until it is reduced by half its original volume. Pour into a plastic squeeze bottle or small glass bowl and cool completely.

Pre-heat your grill to medium high. Drain the vegetables and discard the marinade. Grill the vegetables, turning occasionally until they are softened and lightly browned.

Remove the vegetables from grill to a serving platter and top with balsamic sauce. These vegetables can be served hot or cold.

Serves 6-8 as a side dish.

NOTE: You can also use the marinade on beef and chicken before grilling it. Marinate the meat for 60 minutes, drain the meat, and discard the marinade. Pat the meat lightly with paper towels to remove the excess moisture before grilling it.

Recipe courtesy of Carol Ann Silkes, Ph.D., MBA, C.E.C. Dr. Silkes is a Certified Executive Chef by the American Culinary Federation (ACF) and Assistant Professor in hospitality and tourism management, Purdue University.

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