

Grilled Bruschetta with Eggplant and Banana Peppers

1 loaf ciabatta, sliced
6 heirloom tomatoes, sliced
3 banana peppers, sliced into rings
1 qt roasted eggplant spread
salt & pepper, to taste
1 cup olive oil

Grill the sliced pieces of ciabatta on both sides until grill marks are visible on the bread. Coat one side of the bread with the roasted eggplant spread. Top with a single layer of sliced tomatoes, season with salt and fresh cracked pepper, and sprinkle on banana peppers. Drizzle with olive oil and serve.

Roasted Eggplant Spread

2 large eggplant (about 1 pound)
3 cups vegetable stock
7 tbs olive oil, divided
3 tbs minced garlic
3 tbs grated fresh ginger root
1 1/4 cups yellow onion, minced
2 green chilies, seeded and minced
1 cup fresh basil, picked
salt & pepper, to taste

Roast whole eggplant on a gas grill or burner, thoroughly charring all sides. When fully cooked the eggplant should be limp with the skin blistered and juices oozing out. Let the eggplant cool briefly. Scrape off all the charred skin and chop to a pulp.

In a shallow pan, heat 2 tablespoons of oil over medium-high heat and add the onions. Cook until they are light golden, about 8 minutes, stirring constantly to prevent burning. Reduce heat to medium, add garlic, ginger, chilies and eggplant puree. Cook for another 20 minutes, stirring often. The eggplant should no longer have excessive moisture. Transfer to a food processor, add the basil and blend until smooth, adding the rest of the olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.

Recipe by Garden Chef Julia LeRoy



ATLANTA BOTANICAL GARDEN