

Roasted Eggplant

Swick

Serves 1 | Active Time: 15 minutes | Total Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Chef's Notes

You can roast either small Italian eggplants and serve them as a side dish, drizzled with lemon juice or you can roast larger globe eggplants and use the flesh to add flavor to things like pastas and soups.

Step 1: Salting the Eggplant

- 2 lb eggplant (approx 2 globe or 4 Italian)
 - 1 to 2 tsp sea salt
- To salt the eggplant, simply slice the eggplants in half lengthwise. Then using the tip of a knife, score the flesh in a diamond cross-hatch pattern. Make sure that you go quite deep, but not so deep that you cut through the flesh.

Next press open the cuts and sprinkle the eggplant halves with the salt. Set aside for approximately 30 minutes.

Salting the eggplants draws out their moisture and makes them less like sponges when it comes to oiling them.

Step 2: Roasting & Serving the Eggplant

- lemon wedges or vinaigrette (optional)
 - 8 sprigs fresh thyme
 - 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil (optional)
- Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a baking tray with parchment paper.
- To prepare the eggplant for roasting, gently squeeze the eggplant to remove the salty water — you may want to do this over the sink or over a bowl. Then wipe the eggplant with paper towel to dry them off a bit.

Next, brush the halves of the eggplant with olive oil, if using. Then place the eggplant, cut side down, on top of a couple of sprigs of fresh thyme on the baking tray.

Roast for 1 hour, or until the eggplant collapses and the underside is a rich brown caramel color.

Once done, let cool for about 15 to 20 minutes. before handling,

To serve, gently turn the eggplant cut side up and squeeze with some fresh lemon juice or drizzle with your favorite vinaigrette. If using with another dish, scoop out the flesh, using a large spoon.