



## Ichiban (Japanese) Eggplant #1



We decide to grow Ichiban Eggplant, also known a Japanese Eggplant. Each year we try something new in our garden, and this was something I've never grown, or eaten. When eggplants were of a good size, began to harvest them, and came up with a recipe that I've made several times now. I found that one good sized eggplant is perfect for the two of us. They are long and slender, so it is not as much food as a regular eggplant.

Ingredients (none are measured, you can pretty much wing it!)

1 eggplant  
salt  
black pepper (freshly ground)  
Italian seasoning  
olive oil  
basil (fresh, finely chopped)  
rosemary (fresh, finely chopped)  
garlic powder  
asiago cheese (grated)

Cut off the top and bottom of the eggplant and toss. Slice the eggplant into rings, about 3/4" thick (do not peel the eggplant). Place these on a cookie sheet, and sprinkle a bit of salt on each. Let sit for about 10 minutes, wipe off the water that surfaces along with any salt that wipes off with it. Flip all of the rings and repeat on the other side.

Put rings in a bowl, drying off each ring as much as practical.

Spray rings with olive oil and toss.

Grind black pepper onto the rings (per your taste) and toss.

Sprinkle Italian seasoning (per your taste) onto the rings and toss.

Place rings back onto a clean cookie sheet and broil, with rack on the highest

shelf.

Broil until the eggplant begins to brown.

Flip rings, and broil the second side.

Remove from the broiler, and top each ring with the chopped rosemary, chopped basil, and a good pinch of grated asiago cheese.

Put this back in the broiler, and remove as soon as the cheese melts.

Nothing left to do but eat them!

I found that this eggplant has a better "bite" than standard eggplant. It has a somewhat spongy texture. The skin is not tough and provides a nice chew with each piece. The combinations of flavor make this as much of a snack as a vegetable.

Feel free to use your imagination - you can slice them lengthwise with a mandolin, and use any combination of spices or cheeses you wish. I can't see this not being delicious no matter what you come up with!

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