

Khanem's Tawa

SERVES
8 PEOPLE



Khanem's Tawa

2 MEDIUM-SIZED AUBERGINES, PEELED & CUT LENGTHWISE INTO 1 1/2 cm INCH SLICES
10 SMALL TOMATOES (8 CUT INTO SLICED ROUNDS, 2 DICED)
5 SMALL POTATOES, PEELED AND SLICED INTO ROUNDS
1 MEDIUM ONION, FINELY CHOPPED
6 SMALL LEMONS
1 GREEN PEPPER, DICED
25g OF FINELY CHOPPED PARSLEY
2 TABLESPOONS OLIVE OIL
450g POUND GROUND BEEF
2 CLOVES GARLIC, MINCED
1 TEASPOON SALT
1/4 TEASPOON PEPPER
1/4 TEASPOON OF PAPRIKA
2 425g CANS TOMATO PASTE

Preparation Time: 20minutes
Total Time: 1 hour
Serves: 8

“When my children were young, I would spend hours creating large family meals for them. As they began to grow up and leave for University, my kitchen felt so empty so I began helping my neighbours and teaching them some of my recipes. Now I have grandchildren, so my kitchen is full again, but I still love to teach. Some women here have lost their mothers, and when they come to ask for advice, it fills my heart with joy to help them.”



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1. Coat large round pan with oil and preheat oven to 160 deg C.
2. Layer entire bottom of pan with sliced tomato rounds, leaving a few rounds to add to the top of the dish later
3. Layer sliced potato rounds directly on top of tomato layer
4. In a separate bowl, mix minced beef, chopped onion, green pepper, diced tomato, parsley, garlic, salt, pepper and paprika
5. Layer beef mixture on top of potato layer in pan
6. Brush both sides of aubergine slices lightly with olive oil, and layer on top of beef mixture
7. Brush each slice of aubergine facing up with tomato paste
8. Add remaining tomato rounds on top
9. Place in oven and bake for 30-40 minutes
10. Remove from the oven and serve immediately with quarter slices of lemon to squeeze over.



Khanem and her husband came to Domiz in 2012, leaving their hometown of Qamishli, in Northern Syria, after war broke out. Since arriving in Domiz, Khanem has become something of a local expert when it comes to traditional Syrian cooking. Young women seek her out for advice and she is regularly consulted for help in planning special meals for weddings and birthdays. She explains that her family memories are often intertwined with recollections of the meals she would cook for her children, and it is clear how deeply interwoven food is into the story of her family. Potato soup with a tomato broth, sava, (a wheat based dish similar to couscous), fresh chicken, quartered and fried in oil. Spices like cumin and coriander, and sheep's cheese mixed with garlic. These things don't just represent Syrian cooking to Khanem, they are an embodiment of her personal memory and taste. They represent home.

Although the war has changed everything, and Khanem now finds herself in a kitchen she deems less than adequate, with a limited budget and lack of preferred ingredients, she still finds joy in creating meals for her family. She says her cooking is traditional, and like many women in Domiz, she learned the recipes and techniques from her mother.