

---

*Maitake Mushroom Moussaka- Gorgonzola Goat Milk Bechamel*

---

9x13 baking dish, large rimmed sheet pans (2 if possible)

Components:

- Roasted Eggplant
- Mushroom ragu
- Gorgonzola Bechamel

For the eggplant:

3 Large Globe eggplant  
¼ cup light olive oil  
Dried or fresh oregano (1 tbsp if dried 2 tbsp if fresh)  
Black Pepper  
Salt

Pre-heat an oven to 350. Slice the eggplant lengthwise to create ½ in thick planks (think lasagna). Lay in a single layer in a sheet pan (will need 2 pans) and drizzle the oil, sprinkle with salt and pepper and oregano. Place in oven and cook for 15-20 minutes until eggplant is soft to the touch. Remove from the oven and set aside.

For the mushroom Ragu:

3-4 tbsp of butter (depending how you're feeling)  
½ lb of maitake mushrooms, chopped roughly (make it look like shredded meat)  
½ lb brown button mushrooms, sliced  
1 large yellow onion diced  
3 medium carrots peeled and diced  
1 large or 2 small bell peppers (or any mild pepper) chopped  
4-5 cloves of minced garlic  
1.5 tbsp of grated ginger  
1/2 tbsp thyme (dried)  
3-4 large overripe tomatoes (can use 1 large 28 oz can of crushed tomatoes)  
½-¾ cup red wine (fruity)  
¼ cup soy sauce  
2 tbsp miso paste  
¼ each chopped fresh parsley and cilantro stems (from about small bunch of cilantro)  
Optional 1 -2 tbsp Chinese chili garlic paste

Begin by melting the butter in a large (16" +) skillet, use 2 skillets if less than or use a Dutch oven or large pot. Add in the carrot, onion, bell pepper and cook over medium heat for 5-7 minutes. Add in garlic, ginger, and cook for a few more minutes until softened. Add in soy sauce and cook down until evaporated (the pan should be dry and vegetables begin sticking). Splash in the wine to deglaze and stir in the miso paste and chili paste if using until homogenous. Add in the tomatoes, mushrooms and thyme. Still a best you can to incorporate. Add in the cilantro stems, raise the temperature to high until beginning to boil then reduce and simmer at medium/ medium-low until mushrooms have cooked down and vegetables are very soft, about 20-30 minutes. The consistency should be that of a stew, if the veggies get dry during the cooking add a splash of water to keep the liquid level just below the surface of the vegetables. With about 5 minutes left add in the chopped parsley. Taste for salt/ pepper, it should be quite seasoned/ salty. Turn off the heat when done and set aside.

For the Bechamel:

¼ cup butter  
¼ cup plus a tbsp all-purpose flour  
3 cups of whole goat milk (or cow's milk)  
8 oz of light gorgonzola (Italian sheep milk), cut into cubes  
½ tsp (or so) fresh ground nutmeg

Bring the goat milk to room temperature (warmer the better but definitely not cold!). In a medium pot melt the butter over medium heat. Slowly add in the flour while continuously whisking the butter to incorporate evenly- trying to reduce the amount of clumping. When all the flour is incorporated, slowly whisk in the milk, ensuring the paste that forms doesn't persist into clumps (goal is for ingredients to become homogenous). Continue to cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until the mixture comes to a boil. It should become noticeably thicker once it boils. Stir in the cheese and nutmeg until incorporated.

To assemble:

Grab a 9x13" pan and layer the bottom with about 1 cup of the mushroom ragu. Place a layer of roasted eggplant to cover (much like lasagna). Repeat this process until you are about ½ from the top of the pan. Pour the bechamel over the top of the stack (careful not to overfill the pan). Place the entire pan onto a baking sheet (in case of spill overs) and place in a 350 degree oven. Cook for 35-40 minutes or until the bechamel has dried slightly and the top is beginning to take on some color. Remove and allow to cool for at least 15 minutes (20-25 minutes is better to help set). Serve topped with chopped parsley or cilantro.