

## Moussaka a la Grecque

New York Times Book, pp. 334

Serves: 4-5

This version is half of the original recipe

*1-1/2 medium-size eggplants  
1/4 cup vegetable oil  
1 1/2 large yellow onions, finely chopped  
1 pound ground lamb  
1 1/2 tablespoons tomato paste (HdeH whole small can)  
1/2 cup + red wine  
1/4 cup chopped parsley  
1/4 teaspoon + ground cinnamon  
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste  
1/8 pound butter  
3 tablespoons flour  
1/2 quart milk  
2 eggs, beaten until frothy  
Grated nutmeg  
1 cup ricotta or cottage cheese  
1/2 cup fine breadcrumbs  
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese*



Photography: Henri T. de Hahn

1. Peel the eggplants, and cut them into slices 1/2 inch thick. Brown the slices quickly in 1/4 cup of the oil. Set aside.
2. Heat the remaining oil in the same skillet and cook the onions until they are brown. Add the ground meat and cook 10 minutes. Pour off excess fat (HdeH, keep). Combine the tomato paste with the wine, parsley, cinnamon, salt and pepper. Stir this mixture into the meat and simmer over low heat, stirring frequently until all the liquid has been absorbed. Remove the mixture from the fire.
3. Preheat the oven to 375F.
4. Make a white sauce by melting the butter and blending in the flour, stirring with a wire whisk. Meanwhile, bring the milk to a boil and add it gradually to the butter-flour mixture, stirring constantly. When the mixture is thickened and smooth, remove it from the heat. Cool slightly and stir in the beaten eggs, nutmeg and ricotta.
5. Grease an 11 x 16 inch pan and sprinkle the bottom lightly with bread crumbs. Arrange alternate layers of the eggplant and the meat sauce in the pan, sprinkling each layer with Parmesan and crumbs. Pour the ricotta sauce over the top and bake for 1 hour, or until top is golden. Remove from the oven and cool 20 to 30 minutes before serving. Cut into squares and serve.

NOTE: The flavor of this dish improves on standing 1 day. Reheat before serving.