



NINO'S MARKET FRESH PRODUCE RECIPE

Artichoke & Tomato Casserole



Yield 4 Servings

In common English, an artichoke is a big thistle plant that is native to the Mediterranean. The artichoke grows wild in the south of Europe and is cultivated in the United States, primarily in California. The leaves proceed from the base of the stem and are long and somewhat spiny. Most often, large Artichokes are cooked (upside down) in a mildly acidified water (with lemon juice) until tender (when the bottom most leaves pull away easily from the choke. The artichokes are then removed from the water and either eaten hot or chilled. The leaves are removed and arranged on a platter and are then dressed with a flavorful dressing (like Italian, Caesar or a Lemony Style Dressing). Smaller Artichokes have leaves too small to extract much "pulp" off when eating and therefore the leaves are eaten whole if small and tender. Both sizes of Artichokes can be stuffed and Baby Artichokes can be grilled very successfully.

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| 2 medium | Artichokes | 1 tsp. | Italian Herb Seasoning |
| 2 Tbsp. | Lemon Juice, Fresh | 2 medium | Roma Tomatoes, sliced |
| 2 medium | Sweet Onions, Sliced Thick | 6 oz. | Pepper Jack Cheese, sliced |
| 2 Tbsp. | Olive Oil | 1 cup | Marinara Sauce or Bearnaise Sauce |

Method:

Bend back outer petals of each artichoke until they snap off easily near base. Edible portion of petals should remain on artichoke bottom. Continue to snap off and discard thick petals until central core of pale green petals is reached. Trim brown end of stem and cut off top 2-inches of artichokes; discard. Pare outer dark green surface layer from artichoke bottoms. Cut out center petals and fuzzy centers. Slice artichoke bottoms about ¼ inch thick. Toss with lemon juice to prevent discoloration; set aside.

Saute onions in olive oil 5 to 8 minutes or until tender. Spoon evenly into 2-quart oven-proof baking dish. Sprinkle with Italian herb seasoning. Arrange tomato slices, artichoke slices and cheese slices on onions, over-lapping slightly in center of dish. Cover dish with lid or foil. Bake at 375°F for 40 minutes. Serve with Marinara Sauce or Sauce Bernaise.

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