

TO VEGETABLES  
**with love**

## Eggplant rolls with chickpea filling

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This recipe is a take on involtini, but greatly simplified. Yes, there are still a few steps, but they are each easy and unfussy. Ricotta is commonly used as an eggplant filling, but I've used mashed chickpeas here, gussied up with herbs, with a little tahini to bind it together – it's full of earthy flavour and also has the advantage of being pantry-friendly, economical and vegan. The real shortcut here is the sauce which is no-cook and is simply grated tomatoes kissed with olive oil and garlic. Summer tomatoes are sweet and syrupy enough to be used this way.

Serves 2

400g (13oz) eggplant (1 medium), trimmed and sliced lengthwise 1/4 inch 6mm  
extra virgin olive oil  
sea salt and black pepper  
2 tablespoons chopped chives or scallions  
2 tablespoons chopped parsley, coriander, mint or basil, plus more to serve  
bread, to serve (optional)

### **Herby chickpea filling**

250g (1 can) chickpeas, liquid drained and reserved  
2 tablespoons tahini  
1 clove garlic, grated  
sea salt and black pepper  
zest and juice of 1/2 lemon, plus more for serving

### **Grated tomatoes**

300g tomato  
1 clove garlic  
1/2 -1 teaspoon red chili (pepper) flakes (to your liking)  
sea salt and black pepper  
extra virgin olive oil

Heat a large skillet (frying pan) on medium high for 3 minutes.

While the pan is heating, spread the eggplant slices out on a cutting board and drizzle with a little olive oil; use your hands to coat the entire slice. Flip over and lightly oil the other side.

Working in batches, lay out as many slices of eggplant that will fit into your pan, and sprinkle with a little salt and black pepper. Cook for 2 minutes until golden and then flip over and repeat on other side. Continue cooking remaining eggplant. Set the grilled eggplant aside to cool.

Place the chickpeas in a bowl and mash them with a fork. Stir in 2-3 tablespoons of the chickpea soaking liquid (aquafaba) to loosen up the mixture. Add the tahini, garlic, 1/2 teaspoon of sea salt, big pinch black pepper, lemon zest and juice, and stir to combine. Taste and season with more salt and lemon juice, if needed.

Onto a deep rimmed serving plate or shallow dish, grate the tomato and garlic (I use the large holes of a box grater for the tomato and fine micro plane for the garlic). Add the red chili (pepper) flakes, about 3/4 teaspoon of sea salt and pinch of black pepper, and about 1 tablespoon olive oil. Stir to combine and set aside.

Place a heaped tablespoon of the chickpea filling onto the thicker end of the eggplant and roll it up. Place it straight into the grated tomatoes. Continue filling and rolling the remaining eggplant slices, placing them into the tomatoes as you go. When it's all done, drizzle the eggplant with olive oil, squeeze over some lemon juice, and finish with your choice of herbs.

Serve immediately, as is, or with bread.

Note: This recipe can be prepared several hours ahead of time. It can be kept at room temperature. The eggplant can be grilled and the chickpea filling can be mixed 24 hours ahead of time.