RAW OR COOKED RATATOUILLE

Though the word “ratatouille” may conjure up images of casserole dishes, roasting fragrantly in the oven, this raw spin on the French classic is surprisingly delicious. I love it without any heating at all, but I offer up a dehydrator option for gentle heating, and an oven option if you’re craving a more traditional presentation. Raw jicama or cauliflower rice make wonderful accompaniments, as does a bed of warm quinoa.

I recommend making this dish when tomatoes and zucchini are at the peak of their season—it will make the dish so much fresher and more flavorful. I like to use oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, but the dried ones will be fine too, so long as you soak them in warm water for 20 minutes prior to using. Pine nuts add a delightful crunch, but, if you’re craving a heartier meal, you can stir in cooked or sprouted lentils or chickpeas.

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

2 zucchini, halved lengthwise and cut into 1⁄4-inch slices

1 large carrot, peeled and sliced thinly into coins

1 bell pepper, seeded and diced

1 large heirloom tomato, seeded and diced

1⁄4 cup minced fresh parsley

2 teaspoons minced fresh thyme or

1 teaspoon dried

2 teaspoons minced fresh oregano or

1 teaspoon dried

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

2 tablespoons olive oil

1⁄2 cup, sliced into thin strips, sun-dried tomatoes

1 clove garlic, minced

1⁄2 teaspoon sea salt

Freshly ground black pepper

1 cup pine nuts, cooked or sprouted lentils, or chickpeas

1. Combine all the ingredients except for the pine nuts in a large mixing bowl. Adjust the seasonings to taste (you can add more herbs if you like, or more lemon for a more tart taste).

2. Let all the ingredients marinate for a few hours, so that the flavors can marry. If you’re serving it cool, simply stir in the pine nuts or legumes and plate. If you’re heating it, use one of the options below, and stir in the pine nuts or legumes right before serving.

oven option: Preheat the oven to 400°F. Place the vegetables in a small casserole dish and cook for 15 minutes. Give the vegetables a stir, and cook for another 10 minutes, or until they’re soft throughout.

dehydrator option: Set your dehydrator to 140°F. Spread the vegetables onto two Teflex-lined dehydrator sheets, and dehydrate for an hour before serving them warm.

If you keep the dish raw, it will last overnight in the fridge. If you cook or dehydrate it, it will last for up to 3 days.

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