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### Slow-Cooker Ratatouille

This fragrant fall ratatouille is made simple by the addition of a slow cooker and some whole-grain millet. Traditional eggplant and tomatoes are blended with green beans, carrots, chickpeas and pearl onions for a truly new take on the old classic. A layer of whole-grain millet over top adds texture and fiber to a great blend of vegetables.

#### Ratatouille with Millet

- 1 cup millet
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 3 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 lb. eggplant, cut into 1¼-inch cubes, about 6 cups
- 1 large red bell pepper, cut into 1-inch pieces, 1½ cups
- 1 large carrot, cut into 1/2-inch slices
- 1 can (28 oz.) diced tomatoes, preferably fire-roasted
- 2 cups frozen chickpeas or 1 can (15.5 oz.) rinsed and drained
- 1 1/2 cups frozen pearl onions
- 4 oz. fresh green beans, cut into 1½-inch pieces
- 3 medium garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh rosemary
- 1/2 tsp. salt

In medium saucepan, combine millet with 2 cups water. Cover and bring to boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to simmer and cook until millet is almost soft but slightly al dente, about 20 minutes. Set millet aside, covered, for 10 minutes. Fluff with fork, mix in Parmesan cheese and season to taste with pepper.

While millet cooks, make ratatouille. In large skillet, heat 2 tablespoons oil over medium-high heat. Arrange eggplant in 1 layer and cook until cubes are lightly colored on bottom, 4 minutes. Using tongs, turn and color on second side, 3 minutes. If desired, turn and cook eggplant on a third side for 2 minutes. Transfer browned eggplant to 6-quart slow cooker. If any eggplant is stuck to skillet, scrape and discard it.

Heat remaining oil in skillet. Add red peppers and carrots and cook, stirring often, until peppers look bright red and just start to soften, 3 minutes. Add tomatoes, chickpeas, pearl onions, green beans, garlic and rosemary. Cook, stirring occasionally, until mixture simmers, about 5 minutes. Transfer mixture to 6-quart slow cooker. Season with salt and generous amount of pepper.

Spoon millet over vegetable mixture in even layer. Cover slow cooker. Set it to cook on High for 6 hours, until vegetables are tender but not mushy. If desired, turn slow cooker setting to Warm and let Ratatouille with Millet sit for up to 3 hours before serving. Or let them cool, uncovered, in liner of slow cooker, then cover and refrigerate overnight. To reheat, cover and place Ratatouille with Millet in slow cooker on Low for 3 to 4 hours.

**Makes 8 servings.**

**Per serving:** 290 calories, 9 g total fat (2 g saturated fat), 43 g carbohydrate, 11 g protein, 10 g dietary fiber, 193 mg sodium.

