



## Spicy roasted aubergines

### Melanzane piccanti al forno

Although grown and treated as a vegetable, the aubergine is in fact a fruit, as it bears seeds within its flesh. When an aubergine is cooked correctly it's simply delicious and happily soaks up any flavour you pair with it. This dish, in which the aubergine is the star, can be served as a meat-free main course or as a side dish; it's particularly good with lamb. Make sure you brush the aubergine with the oil rather than pouring it over. If poured, the oil simply sinks into the flesh, giving you overly oily patches. Serve with a mixed salad.

Serves 8 as a side, 4 as a main course

**4 aubergines, halved lengthways**

**6 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for greasing**

**2 fresh, medium-hot red chillies, deseeded and finely sliced**

**75g toasted pine nuts**

**3 tablespoons shredded fresh basil**

**1 tablespoon runny honey**

**1 garlic clove, peeled and crushed**

**50g freshly grated Parmesan cheese**

**Salt**

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/gas mark 6. Grease a large shallow roasting tin.

2. Place the aubergines cut-side up in the roasting tin. Brush with 2 tablespoons of the oil. Sprinkle over the chillies and season with salt. Bake for 25 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, put the pine nuts, basil, honey, garlic, Parmesan and remaining 4 tablespoons of the oil in a small bowl. Stir to combine.

4. Remove the aubergines from the oven and spoon the pine nut mixture evenly over the top of each aubergine. Return to the oven for 5 minutes then serve.