

# Sicilian Caponata Recipe

**Serves:** 6-8 | **Prep Time:** 75 Min | **Cook Time:** 30 Min | **Difficulty:** Easy



## INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium or 2 small Eggplants
- 1/2 lb. (225 grams) Red Peppers
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) Extra-virgin Olive Oil
- 3/4 lb. (340 grams) Yellow Onions
- 2 Garlic Cloves
- 24 ounces (700 ml) Tomato Sauce
- 2 tbsp. (30 ml) Red Wine Vinegar
- 1 tsp. (5 ml) Sugar (optional)
- 3 stalks of Celery
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) Taggiasca olives
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) Capers (rinsed well if salted)
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) Fresh Basil, chiffonade
- Salt and Black Pepper to taste

## DIRECTIONS

### Preparing (*Purging*) The Eggplant

1. Slice the eggplant into fingers about 1 1/2 inches (40 mm) long and place in a colander. Lightly spread salt over the pieces making sure they are all salted.
2. Put a plate on top of the eggplant and weigh it down with something heavy, like a can of tomatoes. Set the colander in the sink and let the water drain for about 1 hour.
3. After they have purged their water, rinse the eggplant pieces and dry them thoroughly with paper towels.

### Cooking Instructions

1. Remove the seeds and ribs from the red pepper and dice into small pieces, about 1/2 inch, then set aside.
2. Clean the celery stalks and remove the ends. Dice the celery into pieces about the same size as the pepper and add to the pepper.
3. Dice the onions into small pieces, again about the same size as the peppers, and add them to the other vegetables.
4. If you used salted capers, rinse them off well. Add the capers and olives to a cutting board and dice them together. Set aside with the crushed garlic, but not with other vegetables.
5. After drying the eggplant pieces, heat the 1/2 cup of olive oil in a large frying/sauteè pan over medium-high heat and fry the eggplant pieces until they are golden brown on all sides. Remove the eggplant pieces from the pan and let dry on paper towels.
6. Over medium-low heat, gently sauté the onions, celery and red pepper until they are softened, but not browned.
7. Add the tomatoes, the optional sugar, the vinegar and continue cooking. Keep stirring until the sauce thickens and the tomatoes have broken down, approximately 20 minutes.
8. Add the olives, capers and sauteed onions, celery and pepper. Then stir in the eggplant to marry all the flavors, but only for a minute or two.
9. Remove from the heat and add the basil and salt and pepper to taste.