

## Grilled Vegetable Kebabs with Two Marinades

Have you ever had a mixed veggie kebab where the cherry tomatoes were shriveled and mushy but the mushrooms were still floury and raw? The simple act of color-coding and skewering one type of vegetable on one skewer solves this problem. This way, every vegetable, whether zucchini, tomato or onion, can cook to its prime without compromise. One word about choosing eggplant (aubergine) for kebabs: Try to find Japanese or Chinese eggplants. They're long and skinny, so it's easy to cut them crosswise into rounds and thread through the skewers. Plus, you don't have to play engineer to figure out the best shape and size to cut them into, as you would with a pear-shaped globe eggplant.

PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 10 MINUTES

(DEPENDING ON THE NUMBER OF BATCHES)

MAKES: 4 SERVINGS

**1 medium zucchini, cut into  $\frac{3}{4}$ -in (2-cm) thick rounds**

**1 large red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded and cut into 2-in (5-cm) squares**

**1 large red onion, peeled, quartered and cut into  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -in (4-cm) petals**

**$\frac{3}{4}$  lb (375 g) eggplant, cut into  $\frac{3}{4}$ -in (2-cm) thick slices**

**12 button mushrooms**

**12 cherry tomatoes**

**12 to 18 bamboo skewers, soaked in water for 30 minutes**

**$\frac{1}{2}$  cup (125 ml) Japanese Grilling Sauce or Lemongrass-Citrus Marinade (page 77)**

**Tips** Vegetables can be threaded onto skewers 1 day ahead and chilled, covered.

- You can also broil the vegetable skewers in 2 batches on the oiled rack of a broiler pan, 4 to 6 inches from preheated broiler. Turn over once.
- Both marinades can be made a week ahead. Refrigerate in an airtight container.

Place the zucchini in a large bowl and toss with 1 to 2 tablespoons of your chosen marinade. Repeat with the remaining vegetables in separate bowls, working with one type at a time and keeping them separate.

Use 2 to 3 skewers per type of vegetable, and don't mix vegetables on any skewer. Thread the zucchini and eggplant horizontally through the slices so the cut sides will lie flat on the grill. Leave a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch (1.5-cm) gap between the tomatoes, mushrooms, bell peppers and onions.

Prepare a grill for cooking over medium-hot coals or moderate heat for gas. Lightly oil the grill rack.

Grill the kebabs in two to three batches, covering if using a gas grill. Grill for 6 to 10 minutes (depending on the vegetable), turning over once, until the vegetables are tender and lightly browned. The tomatoes should be blistered and shriveled.

Transfer the skewers to a platter as they cook. Drizzle with remaining marinade





## Japanese Grilling Sauce

*Tare* is a general term used in Japanese for basting sauces used as a marinade or dipping sauce. Think yakitori (chicken skewers), *yakiniku* (grilled meats) and especially teriyaki sauce.

PREP TIME: 30 MINUTES

MAKES: ½ CUP (125 ML)

**2 cloves garlic, smashed and peeled**

**Chubby 1-in (2.5-cm) knob fresh ginger, peeled and sliced**

**1 green onion (scallion), cut into 2-in (5-cm) pieces**

**½ cup (125 ml) low-sodium vegetable stock**

**¼ cup (60 ml) soy sauce**

**¼ cup (60 ml) mirin**

**2 tablespoons honey**

**1 tablespoon rice vinegar**

Bring all ingredients to a boil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring to mix. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer until reduced to a little more than ½ cup (125 ml), 20 to 30 minutes. Strain and discard the solids. Allow to cool.

## Lemongrass-Citrus Marinade

Traditionally, this marinade uses the juice of the native Filipino lime called calamansi. Fragrant Meyer lemon is a good substitute, or you can combine orange and lime juices.

PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES

MAKES: ½ CUP (125 ML)

**3 cloves garlic**

**Chubby 1-in (2.5-cm) knob fresh ginger, peeled and sliced**

**1 plump stalk lemongrass, trimmed, white part roughly chopped**

**1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon dark brown sugar**

**2 teaspoons fine sea salt**

**1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper**

**¼ cup (60 ml) citrus juice (preferably 2 tablespoons lemon or lime and 2 tablespoons orange)**

**2 tablespoons vegetable oil**

**1 tablespoon rice or cider vinegar**

Place the garlic, ginger and lemongrass in a small food processor and pulse until the mixture resembles confetti. Transfer to a bowl and whisk together with the sugar, salt, black pepper, citrus juice, oil and vinegar.