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Grilled Eggplant, Red Onion and Pepper Sandwich with Basil Mayonnaise



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These sandwiches are easy to make, as the vegetables can be grilled and the mayonnaise prepared up to 2 days in advance. Then assemble the sandwiches just before serving.

**Ingredients:**

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 Tbs. fresh thyme leaves
- 2 Tbs. fresh rosemary leaves
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground pepper
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 2 globe or 4 Asian eggplant, thinly sliced
- 2 large red onions, thinly sliced
- 3 large red bell peppers
- For the mayonnaise:**
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 Tbs. olive oil
- 1/4 cup minced fresh basil
- 1/2 tsp. chopped fresh thyme
- 3/4 cup mayonnaise
- 2 baguettes, each split lengthwise and then cut crosswise into thirds
- 6 to 12 red-leaf lettuce leaves

**Directions:**

Prepare a medium-hot fire in a grill.

In a large nonreactive bowl or shallow dish, combine the olive oil, thyme, rosemary, pepper and salt and stir to mix. Add the eggplant and onion slices and the whole bell peppers and turn to coat well. Let stand at room temperature for about 30 minutes.


Meanwhile, make the mayonnaise: In a blender or food processor, combine the garlic, olive oil, basil and thyme and puree until smooth. Add the mayonnaise and process just until blended. Transfer to a bowl, cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

Place the eggplant, onions and peppers directly on the grill rack or in a grill basket on the rack. Cook the eggplant until a golden crust forms on one side, 7 to 8 minutes. Using tongs, turn and cook on the other side until a golden crust forms and the interior is cooked through, 6 to 7 minutes more. Cook the onions until lightly browned on one side, 4 to 5 minutes. Turn and cook until lightly browned on the other side, 3 to 4 minutes more. Cook the peppers, turning as needed, until the skins are evenly blackened and blistered, 4 to 5 minutes per side.

Remove the eggplant and onions and set aside. Place the peppers on a plate, cover with aluminum foil and let stand for 10 minutes, then peel away the skins. Cut the peppers in half lengthwise and remove the seeds. Cut the halves lengthwise in half.

Spread the cut sides of the baguettes evenly with the mayonnaise. Top the bottom halves with the eggplant, onions, bell peppers and lettuce leaves, dividing evenly. Top with the remaining baguette halves. Serve on individual plates.

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Serves 6.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma Lifestyles Series, *Casual Outdoor Dining*, by Georgeanne Brennan (Time-Life Books, 1998).

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