



Lidia Bastianich's Ricotta Frittata
Frittata con Ricotta
Serves 4 to 6

Frittata is the quintessential Italian meal. You can flavor it with anything you have on hand, and one of my favorite ways is adding dollops of fresh ricotta. Ricotta is a by-product of cheesemaking: after the curds for the cheese are drained from the whey, the whey is recooked with the addition of some milk, and soft ricotta curds slowly form. Ricotta is delicious, and Italians use it in just about any dish, from appetizer to pasta to soup to desserts, and, as here, in frittatas as well.

The Italian American immigrants continued this tradition of using ricotta, and it can be found in a lot of Italian American kitchens. Since it was also easy to have a couple of chickens on hand in the backyard, we always had some fresh eggs. When there is nothing else in the house except eggs, this is the meal to make.

Ingredients

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 large onion, sliced 1/4-inch thick
1 ripe large tomato, sliced 1/2-inch thick
8 large eggs
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
8 large basil leaves, shredded
1/2 cup grated Grana Padano or Parmigiano-Reggiano
6 tablespoons fresh ricotta, drained

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Heat oil in a 10-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add onions and cook until softened, about 5 to 6 minutes. Push onion slices to one side of the skillet, and lay the tomato slices in one layer in the cleared space. Sear the tomato, turning once until the slices soften just at the edges, about 30 seconds per side. Remove tomatoes to a plate, let onions continue to cook while you prepare the eggs.
2. In a bowl, beat eggs with the salt. Stir in basil and 1/4 cup of the grated cheese until well mixed.
3. Spread the onion slices in an even layer in the bottom of the skillet and pour eggs on top. Reduce heat to medium-low and let cook until the eggs begin to set around the edges of the pan, about 2 to 3 minutes.
4. Arrange tomato slices on top of the frittata and drop tablespoons of the ricotta between the tomato slices. Sprinkle all over with the remaining grated cheese. Bake frittata until set all the way through and the top is golden, about 18 minutes. Let rest for a few minutes, then run a knife around the edge of the skillet and invert onto a plate or cutting board. Serve in wedges, warm or at room temperature.