

Diet

The diet of the ancient Georgians was very healthy and very high in fiber. Historically, traders traveled to the Province of Lazicum from the Middle East and Europe, and both influences can be found in the food. Georgians traditionally put on feasts called *supras*, where a huge assortment of dishes are prepared. Included in the feasts would be a large variety of appetizers, salads, meat and fish dishes, vegetables, and soups. One of their most popular appetizers (which is also very healthy) is a form of the Middle Eastern *baba ghanoush*, called *badrijnis khizilala*.

Healthy recipe

***Badrijnis khizilala* (serves 6-8)**

Ingredients

1 large globe of eggplant
¼ cup pomegranate juice
½ tsp. salt (or to taste)
2 tbsp. olive oil
¼ cup fresh mixed cilantro and dill, chopped
2 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
Dash crushed red pepper flakes or red pepper powder

Directions

1. Prepare an outdoor grill (preferred) or preheat oven to 400 degrees. Prick the eggplant in several places with a fork and place it on the grill grate or oven baking sheet lined with foil or parchment paper. Grill or bake the eggplant until its skin wrinkles and it collapses into itself. This takes about 45 minutes in the oven (a little less time on the grill). Allow to cool.
2. Scrape out the flesh of the eggplant into a food processor. Discard skin.
3. Add other ingredients to food processor and pulse until smooth. Adjust the seasonings to taste.
4. Serve with a crusty whole wheat bread, pita chips, vegetables, or whole wheat crackers.