Method

For the eggplants
- Preheat oven to 200°C (390°F) Fan.
- Cut the eggplants in half, lengthwise and remove the stems.
- Use a sharp knife to score the flesh in a crisscross manner without tearing the skin.
- Add 2 tablespoons of olive oil, salt, pepper and thyme. Spread over the surface of the eggplants with your hands.
- Line a baking pan with parchment paper and add eggplants cut side down.
- Bake for 30-40 minutes, until they soften.
- When ready, remove from oven and transfer to an oven proof baking dish, skin side down. Press down on the flesh to create an “indentation” to add the ground meat filling.

For the ground meat mixture
- Place a nonstick pan over high heat. Add 1 tablespoon of olive oil and let it get very hot.
- Coarsely chop the onion and garlic. Add them to the pan.
- Add the sugar, thyme, cinnamon, cloves, salt and pepper.
- Stir with a wooden spoon and sauté for about 5 minutes, until they caramelize nicely.
- Add the ground meat and sauté for 2-3 minutes until golden.
- Add the wine and wait until the alcohol evaporates.
- Add the tomatoes and allow the mixture to boil for 10-15 minutes, until it reduces.
- When ready, remove from heat and set aside to cool a little.
- Add the gruyere, parsley, thyme and mint.
- Mix and fill the eggplants with a spoon.

For the béchamel sauce
- Place a pot over medium heat.
- Add the butter, flour, salt and pepper. Whisk until the butter melts and the mixture is completely combined.

Ingredients

For eggplants and ground meat
- 3 eggplants, medium sized
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons thyme or oregano, finely chopped
- 1 onion
- 1 clove of garlic
- pinch of sugar
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- 250 g ground meat
- 40 g red wine
- 1 can chopped tomatoes
- 50 g gruyere cheese, grated
- 1 bunch mint
- salt
- pepper

For béchamel sauce
- 25 g butter
- 25 g all-purpose flour
- salt
- pepper
- 250 g milk, at room temperature
- 50 g gruyere cheese, grated
- 2 egg yolks
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

To serve
- 1 tablespoon parsley, finely chopped
- some olive oil

Diatrophikos pinakas

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<th>Calories (kcal)</th>
<th>Total Fat (g)</th>
<th>Saturated Fat (g)</th>
<th>Total Carbs (g)</th>
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<tr>
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- Add the milk in 5 batches, while continuously whisking and wait for each addition to become completely incorporated before adding the next.
- As soon as the first bubbles appear on the surface, remove from heat.
- Add the gruyere, nutmeg, pepper, salt and egg yolks. Whisk until completely incorporated.
- Use a spoon to spread the béchamel sauce over the ground meat filling and sprinkle with ground nutmeg.
- Bake for 10-15 minutes until golden.
- Serve with some extra virgin olive oil and finely chopped parsley.

**Tip**

The milk should be at room temperature so that no lumps form in the béchamel sauce.