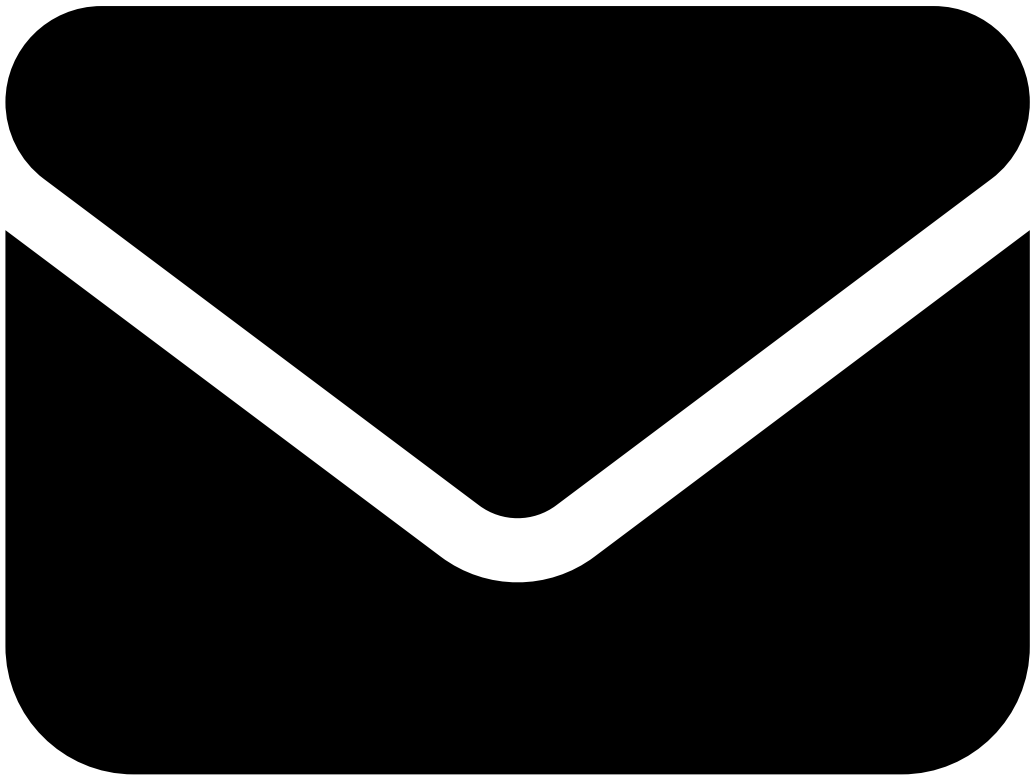


How to Make Italian Pickled Eggplant (Melanzane Sotto'Aceto)''

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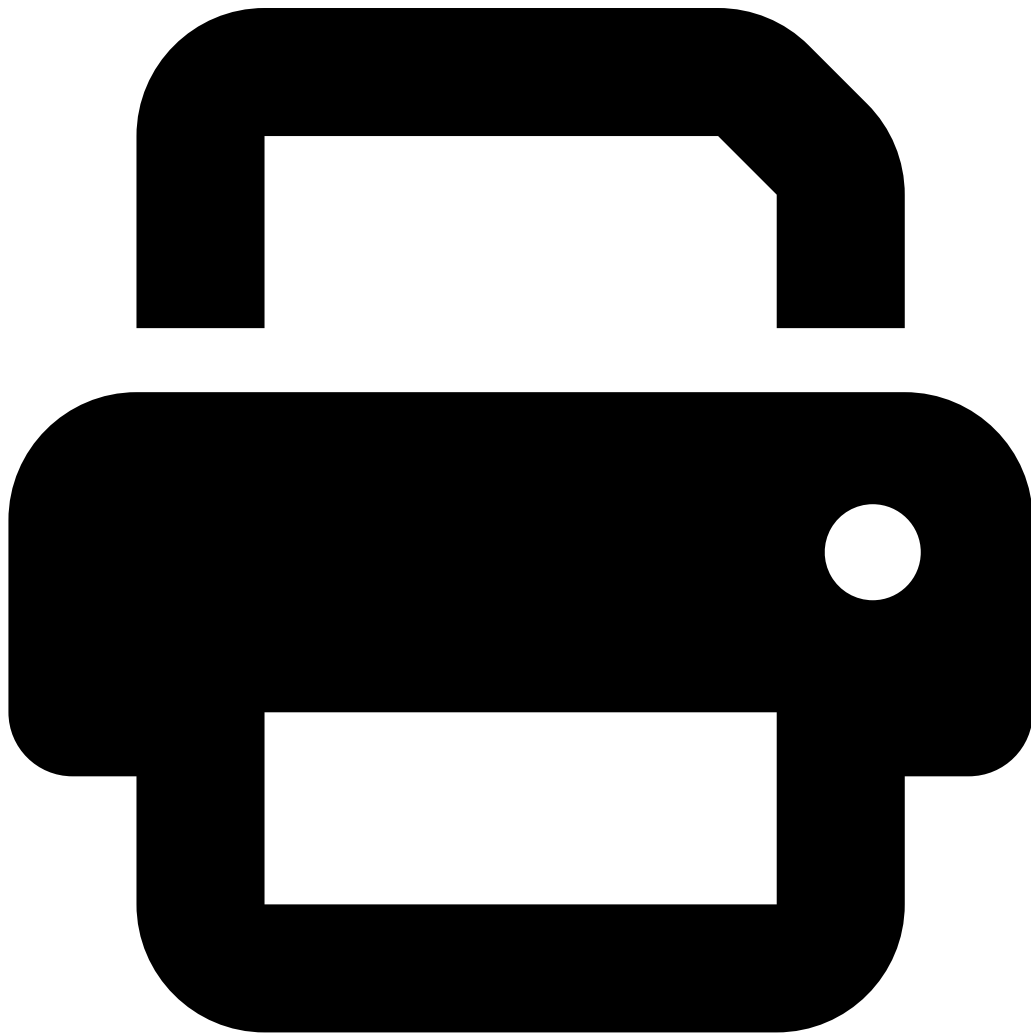
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Every summer growing up in my Italian household, the kitchen turned into a hub of tradition and preservation. Alongside the steamy ritual of canning tomatoes, we'd always make room on the table for pickling eggplant—**melanzane sotto'aceto**. The smell of vinegar, garlic, and oregano filled the air, and jars lined the counters. These eggplant strips weren't fancy—just simple, rustic, and full of flavor. We'd snack on them all year long, layered into sandwiches, served with crusty bread, or just straight from the jar.

Things to know about this how to make Italian Pickled Eggplant (Melanzane Sotto'Aceto)

- **Use firm, fresh eggplant:** Small to medium eggplants work best—avoid overripe ones, which can be bitter or spongy.

- **Salting is essential:** Salting and pressing the eggplant removes excess moisture and bitterness—don't skip this step!
- **White wine vinegar is traditional:** But you can use apple cider vinegar if that's what you have on hand. Avoid balsamic or dark vinegars, which alter the flavor and color.
- **Boil briefly, not too long:** A quick blanch keeps the eggplant from turning mushy. Just a couple of minutes is enough.
- **Oil matters:** Use a good-quality extra virgin olive oil for the best flavor and safe preservation.
- **Flavor it your way:** Garlic, oregano, red pepper flakes, and parsley are classic, but you can add capers, bay leaves, or even thinly sliced peppers for a twist.
- **Let it rest:** The flavor improves after a few days in the fridge. Plan ahead and give it time to marinate.
- **Storage:** Keep the eggplant fully submerged in oil in a sealed jar. Store in the fridge and use within 2–3 weeks unless properly canned.
- **Love preserving and cooking with summer's bounty?**
If this pickled eggplant brought back memories or inspired you to savor the season, don't miss these other Italian summer favorites from my kitchen:

- Amaretti Stuffed Summer Peaches – a rustic, oven-baked dessert with almond and peach perfection
- Tomatoes Oreganata – a quick and flavorful side dish that lets peak-season tomatoes shine
- Zucchini Orzo with Summer Tomatoes – light, herby, and perfect for warm evenings

- Fresh Italian Summer Plum Cake – made with homegrown plums, cinnamon, and a touch of sour cream

Italian Pickled Eggplant (Melanzane Sotto'Aceto)"



- 2 large eggplants
- Kosher or sea salt (for sweating the eggplant)
- 2 cups white wine vinegar (or apple cider vinegar)
- 2 cups water
- 2 garlic cloves (thinly sliced)
- 1 teaspoons dried oregano (or fresh, if preferred)
- Crushed red pepper flakes (optional, to taste)
- Fresh chopped parsley and basil
- Extra virgin olive oil (enough to cover)
- 1 teaspoons dried oregano (or fresh, if preferred)
- Crushed red pepper flakes (optional, to taste)
- Fresh chopped parsley and basil

1. **Peel & Slice the Eggplant:** Peel the eggplants and cut them into thin strips (about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick and 2–3 inches long).
2. **Salt & Press:** Layer the eggplant strips in a colander,

sprinkling each layer generously with salt. Place a plate or weight on top and let sit for at least 4–6 hours (or overnight) to draw out bitterness and excess water.

3. **Rinse & Squeeze:** Rinse the salted eggplant under cold water to remove excess salt. Squeeze out as much moisture as possible by hand or with a clean towel.
4. **Boil in Vinegar Mixture:** In a large pot, bring **2 cups white wine vinegar** and **2 cups water** to a boil. Add the eggplant and blanch for about **2–3 minutes**, just until slightly tender. Drain well and let cool.
5. **Season:** Place the cooled eggplant in a bowl. Add **sliced garlic, oregano, crushed red pepper flakes** (if using), and **chopped parsley**. Toss to combine.
6. **Jar & Cover in Oil:** Pack the seasoned eggplant into **sterilized jars**, pressing down slightly. Pour **extra virgin olive oil** over the top, making sure the eggplant is fully submerged. Tap jars to release air bubbles.
7. **Seal & Store:** Seal the jars tightly. Store in the refrigerator for up to **2–3 weeks**. For longer storage (pantry-safe), use proper canning methods.
8. **To Serve:** Let the flavors develop for at least **3 days** before eating. Serve as part of an antipasto platter with bread, cheese and cured meats.