

Breakfast Strata

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons butter
- ¼ cup chopped onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 3 cups vegetables, chopped (mix of asparagus, spinach, broccoli, zucchini, bell pepper)
- 6 cups day-old bread, cut in 1 inch cubes (a mix of white and whole grain or rye is good)
- 1½ cups grated cheddar cheese
- 12 eggs
- Chopped parsley and chives
- 2 cups milk
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

Directions

1. The night before, heat the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and sauté until onion is translucent. Add the broccoli and asparagus and cook for 4 or 5 minutes. Then add the zucchini, bell pepper and spinach and sauté until vegetables are just starting to cook.
2. Grease a 9x13-inch baking dish. Arrange bread in an even layer in the bottom. Spread the vegetables evenly on top of the bread cubes and sprinkle with cheese.
3. Whisk eggs, milk, salt, pepper, parsley and chives in a large bowl, and pour over all ingredients in the baking dish. Cover tightly with aluminum foil and refrigerate overnight.
4. In the morning, preheat the oven to 350°F. Remove strata from the refrigerator but don't unwrap.
5. Bake in the preheated oven about 25 minutes. Remove foil and continue baking until puffed, lightly browned, and the center is set. Total baking time should be about an hour and 15 minutes. Allow to cool for 10 minutes then cut in squares and serve.

Variations:

- Use a blend of cheeses
- Substitute part of the milk for half-and-half for a richer flavor
- Add cherry tomatoes to the vegetables as you are cooking
- Use red, yellow or orange bell peppers for color
- Use other fresh or dried herbs such as basil or oregano

