

Stephanie's Simple Roasted Vegetables

Roasting vegetables shows you how the size of the pieces of vegetable affects the cooking time. For example:

- A whole unpeeled potato will take 1 hour to bake in a 200°C oven.
- If the potato is cut into quarters it will take 30 minutes to bake.
- If the potato is cut into smaller, bite-sized pieces it will bake in 20–25 minutes.
- A halved onion will take 1 hour to bake in a 200°C oven.
- If the onion is cut into thick slices it will take 30 minutes to bake.
- If the onion is cut into thinner slices it will take 20–25 minutes to bake.

And so on. The more often you roast vegetables the more cooking times will become second nature.

You need an oven-proof dish or tray that will hold your choice of vegetables comfortably but without too much empty space. I suggest that once the vegetables are prepared you tip them into the proposed dish to see if the dish is in fact the ideal size. If not choose another one.

Vegetables should be returned to a mixing bowl and for every 2 cups of chopped vegetable add 2 teaspoons of Australian extra-virgin olive oil, a little salt, any herbs being used and mix well.

The most delicious vegetable roasts will include some member of the onion family (onion, shallot, leek, garlic) and at least two other vegetables.

Some of my favourite combinations are:

- onion, potato, carrot, garlic, rosemary
- pumpkin, sage, parsnip, sliced onion
- sweet potato, garlic, pumpkin, red onion, a chilli
- potato, garlic, shallots, mushrooms, rosemary
- eggplant, skinned capsicum, tomato, garlic, basil.

There are dozens more.

Tips:

- Halfway through the cooking time, shake the dish firmly to make sure nothing is sticking.
- If the vegetables look too dry, drizzle in a tablespoon of Australian extra-virgin olive oil.
- Don't bother to peel the skins from the potato or the pumpkin. The skins will be delicious once roasted.
- Before serving, if you want the dish to be a bit more juicy, stir in a small amount of fresh tomato sauce, a small amount of chutney, or a spoonful of balsamic vinegar.