

## Valigini ("Little Suitcases")

"Valigini" means "little suitcases" in Italian. That's what my mother-in-law called this recipe because of the way the cabbage leaves enclose the meat filling. You may be surprised to find ground nutmeg mixed in with chopped meat but wait until you taste this combination - you'll love it! In northern Italy, nutmeg partners well with a variety of ingredients.



Serving size: 2 valigini. Serves 6.

### Ingredients

- 12 savoy cabbage leaves
- 1 lb. 90% lean chopped meat
- 7 large sprigs parsley, leaves only
- 1 large celery stalk, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. pepper
- 1/8 tsp. nutmeg
- ½ cup plain bread crumbs
- ½ cup grated parmigiano reggiano cheese

### Directions

1. Remove cabbage leaves carefully from its base, wash and steam them for 2-3 minutes or until they appear wilted. Set aside.
  2. Place chopped meat in the bowl of a food processor and pulse for 15 seconds (25 pulses). Add parsley and celery to the meat and allow to process for another 15 seconds.
  3. In a large heavy skillet heat oil and garlic, add the meat mixture and sauté for 5 minutes on medium-high heat. Press with fork to break up mixture into very small crumbled pieces. Add in the spices and mix well.
  4. Return meat mixture to a clean food processor bowl. Process for 1 minute while adding the breadcrumbs and grated cheese through the food tube.
  5. Line up the cooked cabbage leaves on the counter, place a heaping tablespoon of the meat mixture (approx. 1.25 oz.) on the lower half of each leaf and gently roll up, taking care to close in sides as you roll. Secure with a toothpick.
  6. Add ½-1 cup homemade tomato sauce to a large Dutch oven and heat gently. Arrange the pieces to cover the bottom. Cover and simmer for 15 minutes, turning each piece over after 7-8 minutes. Serve hot.
- (Variation: Instead of steamed cabbage leaves, try putting this mixture into the cavity of steamed zucchini, sliced lengthwise with pulp removed.)

## Nutritional Information

Calories: 302

Carbohydrates: 12 g

Protein: 25 g

Fat: 17 g

Saturated Fat: 6 g

Cholesterol: 67 mg

Fiber: 3 g

GI Value: 52 - low