

## THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES



### **Meatball-Stuffed Zucchini** (adapted from Dominica Cooks and Cook's Illustrated)

Makes 4-6 first course servings or 2 main course servings

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced, divided
- 1 (14-ounce) can whole tomatoes, chopped with scissors in the can
- salt
- 1 slice white sandwich bread (crusts discarded), torn into small cubes
- ¼ cup buttermilk or 3 tablespoons plain yogurt thinned with 1 tablespoon milk
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese, plus more for topping
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley leaves
- 1 large egg yolk
- pinch ground black pepper
- ½ pound ground beef or lamb
- 2 large or 3 small zucchini or summer squash, halved lengthwise, seeds scraped out and discarded

1. Heat the oven to 400 degrees. Add the oil and 1 clove of garlic to an 8-by-8-inch (or equivalent size) baking dish; transfer to the oven until the garlic is sizzling, 5-8 minutes. Stir the tomatoes and a pinch of salt into the oil; set aside.

2. In a medium bowl, combine the bread and buttermilk or yogurt and milk; set aside for 10 minutes for the bread to soften. Stir in the cheese, parsley, egg yolk, remaining garlic, ¼ teaspoon salt, and pepper. Using your hands, evenly mix in the ground meat.

3. Divide the meat mixture evenly between the halved and cored zucchini. Arrange the stuffed zucchini in the baking dish. Transfer the dish to the oven and bake until the zucchini is softened and the meat is cooked through, 30-40 minutes. Let rest for 5-10 minutes. To serve, spoon the tomato sauce over the zucchini and top with parmesan cheese.