

One of the most commonly wasted foods is a loaf of bread, although a lot of people freeze theirs to preserve it. If you end up with a slightly stale loaf of bread that you want to get rid of, try this veggie casserole with a garlic bread crust!

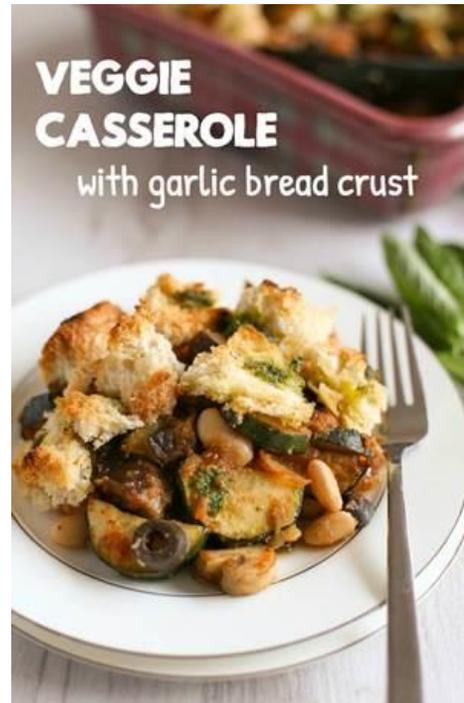
Serves: 4

Ingredients:

- 1 T. olive oil
- 1 med. zucchini, chopped
- 1 med. eggplant, chopped
- 1 yellow bell pepper, chopped
- 15 oz. can cannellini beans, drained
- 3 T. sliced black olives
- 15 oz. can tomato sauce
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 4-inch wedge of a loaf of bread (or 6-8 slices), torn into 2-inch chunks
- Herbed garlic butter
  - 2 T. butter, softened
  - 2 cloves garlic, minced
  - Small bunch fresh basil, or 1 tsp. dried basil
  - 1 T. olive oil

Directions:

1. Heat oil in a large frying pan, and add the diced vegetables. Cook for 5-10 minutes over a medium heat, until fairly soft. Add the drained cannellini beans, sliced olives, and tomato sauce. Mix to combine, and season to taste.
2. Place the torn chunks of bread in a food processor and process a few times so that some of the bread forms crumbs, with other pieces remaining chunky.
3. To make the herbed garlic butter, put the butter, minced garlic and basil in a small bowl, mix well.
4. Heat oven to 375 degrees F. Transfer the vegetable mixture to a large baking dish, and top with the bread. Dollop the garlic butter on top and drizzle lightly with olive oil.
5. Bake for around 30 minutes, until the garlic bread crust is crispy and golden brown.



**Nutrition Info Per Serving:** Calories 351, Total Fat 15.1g, Total Carbohydrate 47.1g, Protein 11.2g, Fiber 11.3g

Something in the kitchen gets forgotten and ends up “past its prime”. Has this happened to you? If you’re like the majority of people, this has probably occurred in your household on more than one occasion. 51% of American households have thrown away food they bought but never used. Not that anyone really wants to waste the food, but it just happens. But, luckily, there are ways to make sure to use up those foods that may be getting close to tossing out. Older produce such as softer, limper vegetables can be used up in casseroles or soups. Fruit such as apples and pears that have gotten soft, may be used for delicious crisps or desserts. Old bread, with no mold, can be used to make croutons, stuffing, or a strata recipe. Fruits and vegetables that are a little past their prime can be blended up and used in homemade salad dressings or smoothies. Nine out of 10 Americans have thrown away food because they’re confused by the “sell by”, “use by”, and “best used by” dates on products. Here’s what you need to know about those expiration labels. If a food has an expiration or “use by” date you want to throw this food away once this date has passed for safety reasons. “Best used by” date is an indicator of peak quality and freshness, not food safety. “Sell by” date tells retailers when to pull food from the shelf. Just remember though, if in doubt, throw it out. If you’re not sure whether a food is safe, don’t eat it.