

Southwestern Stuffed Acorn Squash

From EatingWell: September/October 2007

Cumin and chili powder season a filling of turkey sausage, tomatoes, black beans and Swiss cheese for creamy acorn squash. Serve this stuffed squash with warmed corn tortillas for wrapping up bites of all the tasty ingredients.

Ingredients

3 acorn squash, (3/4-1 pound each)
 5 ounces bulk turkey sausage
 1 small onion, chopped
 1/2 medium red bell pepper, chopped
 1 clove garlic, minced
 1 tablespoon chili powder
 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 2 cups chopped cherry tomatoes
 1 15-ounce can black beans, rinsed (see Tip)
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 Several dashes hot red pepper sauce, to taste
 1 cup shredded Swiss cheese

Preparation

Preheat oven to 375°F. Lightly coat a large baking sheet with cooking spray.

Cut squash in half horizontally. Scoop out and discard seeds. Place the squash cut-side down on the prepared baking sheet. Bake until tender, about 45 minutes.

Meanwhile, lightly coat a large skillet with cooking spray; heat over medium heat. Add sausage and cook, stirring and breaking up with a wooden spoon, until lightly browned, 3 to 5 minutes. Add onion and bell pepper; cook, stirring often, until softened, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in garlic, chili powder and cumin; cook for 30 seconds. Stir in tomatoes, beans, salt and hot sauce, scraping up any browned bits. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer until the tomatoes are broken down, 10 to 12 minutes.

When the squash are tender, reduce oven temperature to 325°. Fill the squash halves with the turkey mixture. Top with cheese. Place on the baking sheet and bake until the filling is heated through and the cheese is melted, 8 to 10 minutes.

Tip: While we love the convenience of canned beans, they tend to be high in sodium. Give them a good rinse before adding to a recipe to rid them of some of their sodium (up to 35 percent) or opt for low-sodium or no-salt-added varieties. (Our recipes are analyzed with rinsed, regular canned beans.) Or, if you have the time, cook your own beans from scratch.

Kris S, in Wilmington, sent this great idea:

Just wanted to let you know about an idea I did with the fresh herb bouquet that was in the **BOX** we received last week. Along with setting them on my window sill and putting out a wonderful aroma in my kitchen, I took the herbs and pulverized them and added them to a softened stick of butter. I then rolled the herbed butter in a piece of saran wrap and froze it. This can be taken out and sliced to be used for fish, veggies, spread for bread- or whatever you want to flavor with herbs.

Turkey & Squash Soup

From EatingWell: January/February 2009, November/December 1995

This Southwestern-inspired turkey-and-squash soup gets a little kick from crushed red pepper and some zing from fresh lime juice. You can use leftover turkey or chicken (instead of the cutlets); dice it and add a few minutes before serving. Serve with cornbread.

Ingredients

2 teaspoons corn or soy oil
 2 leeks, trimmed, chopped and rinsed (or sub medium onion ~ LR)
 1 red bell pepper, chopped
 3 cloves garlic, minced
 4 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
 1 1/2 pounds butternut squash, (1 small to medium), peeled, seeded and cut into 1-inch cubes
 2 tablespoons minced fresh thyme, or 2 teaspoons dried thyme
 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin
 1 pound turkey cutlets, cut into 1/2-by-2-inch strips
 2 cups frozen corn kernels
 2 tablespoons lime juice
 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 Freshly ground pepper, to taste

Preparation

Heat oil in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add leeks and bell pepper; cook, stirring often, until the vegetables begin to soften, 3 to 4 minutes. Add garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute more. Stir in broth, squash, thyme and cumin; cover and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook until the vegetables are tender, about 10 minutes.

Add turkey and corn; return to a simmer and cook until the turkey is just cooked through, 3 to 4 minutes. Add lime juice and crushed red pepper. Season with salt and pepper.

A yummy recipe from Jennifer K, in Raleigh:

Butternut Squash Enchiladas

1 butternut squash, peeled and diced into 1" cubes
 1 can corn
 Salsa Verde (got whatever was in a jar in the Spanish foods section)
 1/4 to 1/2 C. chipotle Salsa (again, jarred, but make sure it's chipotle for the smokey flavor)
 Whole Wheat burrito size tortillas

Bake squash for 30 minutes at 350* in greased/sprayed baking dish. When done, mash squash (leave chunks for texture). Add Corn. Add in chipotle salsa. Mix thoroughly. Fill tortillas and place in greased/sprayed baking dish. (should yield 6 enchiladas). Cover in Salsa Verde and Bake for an additional 15 minutes.

Serve with regular or refried black beans.

ITALIAN STUFFED PEPPERS

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- 1 doz. hot peppers (long yellow kind)
- 1 lb. hot Italian sausage
- 1/2 c. seasoned bread crumbs
- 2 tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 c. spaghetti sauce
- 8 oz. mozzarella cheese, shredded

Cut stem end off peppers and remove seeds, wash. Mix well the Italian sausage, seasoned bread crumbs and Parmesan cheese. Stuff mixture into peppers. Place in shallow baking dish. Put enough water to cover bottom. Cover with foil and bake at 400 degrees for 45 minutes. Gently remove peppers. Place in clean baking dish. Pour spaghetti sauce over top. Return to oven for 10 minutes. Sprinkle top with mozzarella and leave in oven until cheese is melted.

Quick Tips

~ A low-calorie solution for frying corn tortillas: place them in the oven, directly on the rack. Bake at 350 F, to desired crispness. The tortillas will automatically fold over into taco shell form with just a little positioning help. And for tortilla chips, lay them on a paper towel in the micro. Ripped into chip pieces. Cook for 2-3 min. Watch carefully. VOILA! Unprocessed tortilla chips!!!

~ A lump of butter or a few teaspoons of cooking oil added to water when boiling rice, noodles, macaroni, or spaghetti will prevent boiling over.

~ A few drops of lemon juice added to simmering rice will keep the grains separate.

Garlic Kale

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 bunch kale
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

DIRECTIONS:

1. Tear the kale leaves into bite-size pieces from the thick stems; discard the stems.
2. Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Cook and stir the garlic in the hot oil until softened, about 2 minutes. Add the kale and continue cooking and stirring until the kale is bright green and wilted, about 5 minutes more.

A delicious recipe from Monica D, in Fuquay Varina:

Baked Eggplant Rolls

- 2 eggplants (about 1 lb. each)
- 1-1/2 tsp. salt, plus salt to taste
- 2 bell peppers
- 1/4 cup toasted fresh bread crumbs
- 1 tsp pine nuts
- 4 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Ground pepper, to taste
- About 16 fresh basil leaves
- White wine vinegar to taste
- 1/4 cup grated pecorino cheese (I used mozzarella and parmesan)
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh flat-leaf parsley

Trim eggplant and slice into 1/2 in slices. Arrange on a rack and sprinkle with salt - Let stand 2 hours (they will exude moisture - pat with paper towel). Bring pot of salted water to a boil and allow slices to boil 4-5 minutes till supple enough to roll. Preheat broiler. Cut bell pepper in half and remove seeds; place cut side down on baking sheet and broil until skins blacken and blister. Remove from broiler, drape loosely with foil and cool for 10 minutes. Peel away skins and chop finely. In small bowl, combine bell peppers, bread crumbs, 1/4 cup or pecorino cheese (I used mozzarella and parmesan), pine nuts and 1 Tbsp olive oil. Sauté the garlic and add to mixture. Season with salt and pepper. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Arrange eggplant slices on work surface. Divide stuffing evenly among slices, top with torn basil leaves and roll slice into neat cylinder. Arrange seam down in greased casserole. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with vinegar. Bake until eggplant is completely tender when pierced, about 1 hour. Remove from oven and sprinkle with remaining cheese and parsley.

Fettuccine with Sweet Pepper-Cayenne Sauce

Sweet red bell peppers are sautéed with garlic and spicy cayenne pepper, then simmered with sour cream and chicken broth to make a hot and luscious pasta sauce. Finish with Parmesan cheese and toss with cooked pasta.

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 ounces dry fettuccine pasta
- 2 red bell peppers, julienned
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 cup reduced fat sour cream
- 3/4 cup chicken broth
- 3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS:

1. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add pasta and cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until al dente; drain.
2. Meanwhile, spray cooking oil in a large skillet and sauté red bell peppers, garlic and cayenne pepper over medium heat for 3 to 5 minutes.
3. Stir in sour cream and broth; simmer uncovered for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in cheese.
4. Toss hot pasta with sauce and season with salt and pepper to taste; serve