

STUFFED PUMPKINS WITH WILD RICE, CHESTNUTS, AND DRIED CHERRIES

Make-ahead side dishes are a great addition to your holiday menu and since all the work is done in advance, several dishes can be heated through at one time in your Convection oven. These mini pumpkins are easy to work with and make a wonderful festive presentation.

Even though winter squash is considered to be hard squash, the skin is actually quite thin, still, you will find cutting them easier if your knife is nice and sharp.

Ingredients

6 assorted mini pumpkins (easily found at a Farmer's market)
3 fresh sage leaves, minced or ¼ tsp dried sage
1 cup wild rice blend
1 medium onion, finely chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
½ cup cooked chestnuts, chopped
½ cup dried cherries
¼ cup chopped fresh parsley leaves
½ cup chicken or vegetable stock

Preparation

In this recipe, the first step is to scoop the seeds out of the pumpkins and bake them for about 35 - 40 minutes until they soften. The wild rice blend is cooked at the same time then combined with the remaining stuffing ingredients. Once the pumpkins have been stuffed they only require heating prior to serving.

For the pumpkins

Heat the oven in the Convection Bake Mode to 350F.

Shave a thin slice off the bottom of each pumpkin so they will sit upright on a baking sheet.

Cut the top of each pumpkin off with a sharp knife, scoop out the seeds and discard. Drizzle a little olive oil in each pumpkin and sprinkle with the sage. Place the pumpkins on a baking pan and



bake for 35 - 40 minutes until they have softened. Remove the oven and set aside to cool.

Meanwhile, rinse the rice and cook following the package directions.

Heat a medium-sized skillet over moderate heat, add a little olive oil and 1 tbsp of butter and saute the onion for several minutes until softened. Stir in the garlic and cook for a few minutes then stir in the chestnuts, cherries, cooked rice, and chopped parsley. Taste and add salt and pepper as needed.

Stir in the vegetable stock to keep the mixture moist during the reheating and stuff each pumpkin with a generous amount of the stuffing. Cool and cover before refrigerating or reheat for 15 - 20 minutes, in the Convection Bake mode at 350F.

Serves 6

WRITE YOUR NOTES: