

Chef Larry gives pumpkin recipes

MOMMA'S BAKED PUMPKIN CASSEROLE

1 medium sized pumpkin
3 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons finely chopped green pepper
3 tablespoons finely chopped onion
1 teaspoon salt
dash pepper
cinnamon, nutmeg and allspice, to taste
¼ cup brown sugar, firmly packed
2 cups marshmallows

Cut pumpkin in pieces. Remove skin, seeds and strings. Parboil in lightly salted water for 30 minutes. Drain and mash. Melt butter in a large skillet. Add green peppers and onions and sauté until golden, about 5 minutes. Stir in pumpkin, spices and brown sugar. Turn into a lightly greased baking dish. Bake at 400 degrees for 20 minutes. Remove from oven and top with marshmallows. Return to oven and continue baking for no more than 5 minutes or until marshmallows are soft and golden.

PUMPKIN CAKE

¼ cup shortening
1 cup brown sugar
¼ cup granulated sugar
2 eggs yolk
¼ cup cooked, mashed pumpkin
¼ teaspoon baking soda
3 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cinnamon

Homemade pizza can be fun to make

AP — Pizza is a favorite with kids. Here are some quick ways to treat your kids to homemade pizza.

FOR THE DOUGH USE:

- One 16-ounce loaf frozen bread dough, thawed and halved.
- Two 10-ounce packages refrigerated bread dough.
- Two 10-ounce packages refrigerated pizza dough.
- One 16-ounce package hot roll mix. Prepare according to package directions for pizza dough.
- Packaged biscuit mix. Prepare according to package directions for pizza crust.
- 16 English muffin halves. Top with sauce, meat, vegetables and cheese. Bake in a 425-degree oven about 10 minutes or until heated through.
- Eight 8-inch flour tortillas. Top with sauce, meat, vegetables and cheese. Bake the tortillas, half at a time, in a 425-degree oven about 10 minutes or until hot.
- Four 6-inch pita breads, split horizontally. Top with sauce, meat, vegetables and cheese. Bake in a 375-degree oven, directly on the oven rack, about 10 minutes and you'll have a crispy crust.

Bake the tortillas, half at a time, in a 425-degree oven about 10 minutes or until hot.

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¾ cup chopped nuts
¼ cup milk or buttermilk

Cream shortening and both sugars together. Add egg yolks and pumpkin. Sift together dry ingredients and add to pumpkin mixture. Mix well, alternating with a little milk or buttermilk until a thick batter is made. Stir in nuts. Pour into two 8-inch layer pans, well greased and floured. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes. Cool. Put together with spiced whipped cream or cream cheese frosting.

PUMPKIN TEA BREAD

1 ½ cups sifted flour
¼ teaspoon baking soda
¼ teaspoon cream of tartar
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ cup shortening
½ cup sugar
2 eggs, well beaten
1 cup mashed, cooked pumpkin
¼ teaspoon each cinnamon and nutmeg

Sift together dry ingredients. Set aside. Combine shortening and sugars and cream well. Add eggs and pumpkin and mix well. Add dry ingredients and mix well. Pour into a well-greased loaf pan and bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes to 1 hour or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Makes 1 loaf.

FOR THE MEAT USE:

- Sliced pepperoni.
- Cubed fully cooked ham or Canadian-style bacon.
- Cubed cooked turkey, smoked turkey, or chicken.

FOR THE SAUCE USE:

- Canned pizza sauce.
- Canned spaghetti or Italian cooking sauce.

FOR THE CHEESE USE:

- Packaged shredded mozzarella cheese.
- Packaged grated parmesan.

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Colorful, plentiful and tasty

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availability. Riding the middle of the road that can categorize it either as a summer or winter variety falls another James Gang favorite, the spaghetti squash.

This is a football-shaped yellow squash that, when cooked, falls into gossamer threads resembling spaghetti. The spaghetti squash has done a lot to lift up the diet industry, especially in the old days before pasta was "legalized" and dieters used this squash instead of starchy pasta to smother with sauce.

By far the most popular summer squash is the ubiquitous zucchini that graces most gardens throughout metro-Detroit than any other. Zucchini squash plants are like bunny hutches, start one and enjoy zucchini from June 1 till the first hard frost. During that time, you also will send squash to friends, neighbors and relatives because even without the help of Miracle Grow, these things propagate faster than the speed of light.

PATTYPANS ALSO are called cymylins and are known in England as custard marrow. As with most other squash, you can stuff 'em, steam 'em, boil 'em, bake 'em or fry 'em, but delicate little pattypanners deserve to be treated more fairly. Try

cutting them into matchsticks (julienne) and toss into a minuscule amount of hot oil for about 30 seconds, or better yet, thinly slice and pan fry quickly in some hot butter. As with most of the summer varieties, they can be cut into matchsticks, given an egg bath, then rolled in breadcrumbs and fried for an "altered-ego" potato.

Crookneck varieties frighten more people with their looks, but as Momma always said, "Looks can be deceiving." The only problem I ever encountered with crookneck squash was, when purchased, it weighed in at just under three pounds and the family ate crookneck frits steamed and baked three nights in a row.

All summer squashes should be kept in a cool, dark area except for zucchini and yellow squash, which should be refrigerated for extended life. Because of its high water content, summer squash does not freeze well unless pureed prior to freezing.

Winter squashes are by far the firmest of the varieties. Winter squashes include the venerable acorn, which places a close second to cranberry sauce as the perennial table favorite at Thanksgiving. The giant Hubbard is easily detected by a gargantuan size that closely resembles one of the pod people from science-fiction oddities.

Buttercups and turbanos both look like Turkish headwraps, with buttercups heading the taste category, coming in like a sweet potato, while the turban squash is more gourd-related and looks prettier than it actually tastes.

THE BUTTERNUT looks like a long-necked pear and cries out for an addition of brown sugar, cinnamon, butter and a sprinkle of nutmeg to bring out its bland taste. Last, but certainly not least, is by far the most widely purchased of all winter squashes, especially at this time of year — the pumpkin. And, yes, pumpkin is a member of the squash family — and if you need a decorative description, you need more help than this column will ever be able to offer.

Winter squashes do not require refrigeration. If you are planning to keep them at room temperature, do so for not longer than one week or they will begin to soften. If you happen to be a squash lover and buy them by the bushel, keep them covered with an old blanket in the garage on the back, covered porch for an indefinite winters rest.

Like their summer cousins, puree to freeze and use in soups, pastas, casseroles or as a side dish by them-

selves. Three pounds of whole squash will yield a little over three cups when cooked and pureed.

For any winter variety, remove the stem, cut in half, and scoop out and discard seeds and strings. If you are planning to boil, steam or fry, cut them into smaller sections and peel first before cooking. This writer thinks that winter squash are absolutely smashing when stuffed and baked, especially with a juicy filling.

Make your favorite hearty vegetable soup and place it inside a scooped-out winter squash, then bake at 350 degrees for about 45 minutes or until the squash is tender. This not only increases the flavor but makes for a great serving piece when brought to the table. Meat loaf baked in a scooped-out winter squash also will be moist, juicy and flavorful, in addition to being different.

THE BEST BIT of news regarding both summer and winter squash is that not only are they friends of dieters, most coming in at approximately 70 calories per eight-ounce serving, but they are loaded with all sorts of vitamins and nutrients.

When baked, broiled, boiled, fried or steamed, squash can be a welcome addition to any fall harvest table.

Try some of these great recipes and makes squash lovers out of everyone.

SQUASH PIE (As good as pumpkin pie.)

2 eggs
2 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 ½ teaspoons cinnamon
¼ teaspoon nutmeg
¼ teaspoon allspice
¼ teaspoon ginger
¼ cup firmly packed brown sugar
¼ cup granulated sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 cups squash puree
1 cup milk or cream or half and half
1 partly baked 9-inch pie shell

Beat the eggs well, then beat in flour, salt, spices, sugar and vanilla. Stir in the squash puree and milk or cream and blend well. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Pour half the squash mixture in the pie shell. Place the pie shell on a cookie sheet in the oven. Pour in remainder of pie filling (this avoids spills). Bake for 10 minutes, then reduce oven temperature to 350 degrees and continue baking for 45 minutes. May be served warm, cold or at room temperature. (From "The Classic Vegetable Cookbook" by Ruth Spears, Harper & Row, paperback, 1989.)

CURRIED PUMPKIN SOUP

(Works great with all squashes.)
2 cups cooked squash, pureed
2 tablespoons butter/margarine
¼ cup onion, finely diced
2 cups chicken stock
¼ teaspoon curry powder
1 cup heavy cream
fresh ground white pepper to taste

In a large saucepan, sauté onion in butter or margarine till tender. Add squash and cook for 3 minutes, stirring frequently. Stir in ½ cup chicken stock. Transfer to blender or processor and process until smooth. Return to saucepan, add remaining ingredients except cream. Heat to a simmer. Transfer to a hollowed-out squash or pumpkin and bake in a 350-degree oven for 45 minutes or until squash is tender. Using a large spoon, scrape inside of squash and stir into soup mixture. Raise temperature of cream with a little hot soup. Whisk into soup mixture and serve immediately.

SPAGHETTI SQUASH PARMESAN
1 whole cooked spaghetti squash
1 cup (1 stick) butter or margarine
1 cup fresh grated Parmesan cheese

fresh ground pepper to taste

Cut squash in half. Remove seeds and strings. Using a large fork, remove spaghetti meat from squash and fluff lightly with a fork. Add butter or margarine and toss well. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and toss well again. Just before serving, sprinkle generously with fresh ground black pepper.

SQUASH GRATIN PROVENCAL (The garlic and parsley give bland

squash a great taste.)
2 pounds squash, halved, peeled, seeded
8 cloves garlic, finely chopped
½ cup fresh chopped parsley
salt and pepper to taste

4 tablespoons flour
½ cup olive oil

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Dice the squash into small-sized even cubes. Toss into a mixing bowl with the garlic and parsley, making sure the squash cubes are well seasoned with the mixture. Add the salt and pepper, sprinkle with flour and toss till each cube is evenly coated. Generously rub the bottom and sides of an 11-by-14-inch gratin dish with olive oil. Fill with squash mixture. Smooth the surface and drizzle any remaining olive oil over the top. Cook for 2 ½ hours or until a deep, rich crust forms. The squash beneath will have melted to a near puree and will serve 4-6 people. (From "The Classic Vegetable Cookbook.")

clarification

The correct, toll-free telephone number, for the free booklet and carving guide mentioned in Larry

James' Taste buds column on Monday, Oct. 2, is: 1-800-828-0448.

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