

Pumpkin Should Not Be Limited

By ELLY
Consider the pumpkin. For one night of the year it comes into its own—a smiling or a sad-faced jack-o'-lantern. It plays its one-night stand then gets tossed out on its candle-blackened noggin.

If you have steamed and strained pumpkin to make your own pie filling you may have decided it was not worth the time and effort. It is much easier just to open a can and it is not expensive.

But the pumpkin should not be limited to a Thanksgiving pie. It can be baked or pickled. Pumpkin soup, cookies, pudding and jam are other bonuses of this versatile member of the melon family.

PUMPKIN PIE
1 c. pumpkin pie filling
2 eggs, well beaten
1 c. cream or milk
1/2 c. brown sugar
1/2 t. nutmeg or mace
3 large crackers
2 T. brown sugar

Butter a small casserole. Mix all the ingredients in the casserole, except the crackers and the two tablespoons of brown sugar. Beat until the mixture is creamy and gets paler in color. Roll the crackers into fine crumbs, add the brown sugar and sprinkle over the pudding. Dot with butter. Bake for 10 minutes in a 350-degree oven. Reduce heat to 325 degrees and bake 20 to 30 minutes longer.

BAKED PUMPKIN
1 medium pumpkin
3 c. milk or light cream
1 c. maple syrup or honey
1/2 t. ground ginger
1 t. cinnamon
1/2 t. nutmeg
1 t. ground cloves
1/2 c. butter
1 c. molasses

Cut the stem end and scoop out the seeds and loose fibers. Pour in the milk or cream, maple syrup or honey, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves. Put the lid back on and hold in place with a wooden toothpick. Set the pumpkin on a baking sheet and bake for five or six hours in a 300-degree oven. Check after four hours to see if it is getting soft. When done, take off the top and pour in the butter and molasses. To serve, scoop pumpkin from shell and stir it with the butter and molasses. Any left over can be scooped from the shell and refrigerated. It can be re-warmed.

PICKLED PUMPKIN
5-6 lb. pumpkin, pared
1 pt. cider vinegar
3 lb. sugar
1 t. whole cloves
1 T. cinnamon stick, broken
2 pieces crystallized ginger
Cut the pumpkin into one-inch cubes. Bring the vinegar and sugar to a boil and simmer until the sugar is dissolved. Place the cloves, ginger and cinnamon in a bag. Add to the syrup and boil for five minutes. Add the pumpkin and bring the mixture to a fast, rolling boil. Boil over low heat for 25 minutes, stirring often. Remove the spice bag and put the pumpkin in sterilized jars. Pour the vinegar syrup on top to completely cover and seal. Yields five to six pints.

PUMPKIN COOKIES
1 1/2 c. strained or canned pumpkin, browned
1/2 c. lard
2 eggs
1 t. vanilla
2 1/2 c. flour
1 t. baking powder
1/2 t. salt
1/2 t. cinnamon
1/2 t. nutmeg
1 c. nuts, chopped
1 c. raisins

Cream together the sugar and the lard. Add the vanilla and the eggs and beat until creamy and light. Add the pumpkin and blend in thoroughly. Sift together the flour, baking powder and spices and add to the creamed mixture. Stir in the nuts and raisins. Drop by teaspoonful on a greased baking sheet. Bake in a 375-degree oven until lightly browned, about 15 minutes. These freeze very well.

PUMPKIN SOUP
2 lbs. pumpkin, diced and peeled
2-3 T. butter
1 t. nutmeg
1 c. water
1 c. milk
1/2 c. cream 1/2 c. croutons
Peel and dice the pumpkin. Melt the butter and add the pumpkin and nutmeg. Cover and simmer over low heat for 20 minutes. Add water and milk. Continue cooking for 10 minutes. Force through a sieve. Add the cream and the croutons. Season to taste.



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