



RECIPES

Squash, Bean & Kale Stew

submitted by Renee Foley

This vegetarian stew uses fresh, locally grown ingredients in the spirit of ethical eating. It is based on a traditional Native American recipe.

1 Anaheim chili
2 medium onions, diced
4 gloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 medium butternut squash (2 1/2 to 3 pounds), peeled, seeded and diced
2 cans (15 ounces each) pinto beans, rinsed and drained
2 cups vegetable broth
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon dried sage
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 bunch kale, washed and shredded
Crumbled Queso Blanco (optional)*
Roasted pepitas **

Place chili on a foil covered broiler pan and broil about 4" from heat, turning frequently, until all sides are blackened. Transfer to a ziplock bag, seal and allow to cool enough to handle. when cool, scrape off the blackened skin and seed and dice chili.

In a medium skillet, saute onions and garlic in olive oil until onions are tender, about 5 minutes. Combine diced chili, onion mixture, squash, beans, vegetable broth, cinnamon, pepper and salt in a crock pot. Cook on low heat for 4 hours. Stir in kale and cook for 1 hour longer.

Garnish each serving with crumbled Queso Blanco (if using) and pepitas.

*If you choose to omit the cheese, you may have to increase the salt a bit.

**Pepitas are shelled pumpkin seeds, and are available at Trader Joes and Mexican supermarkets. If you can only find raw pepitas, toast in a dry skillet until fragrant and allow to cool before serving.

Whole Grain Cornbread

submitted by Renee Foley

12 servings

1 cup yellow cornmeal
1 cup whole wheat flour
1/4 cup sugar (Splenda for Baking may be substituted)
2 tablespoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup milk
1/3 cup vegetable oil
1 egg (1/4 cup Egg Beaters may be substituted)

Preheat oven to 400°. Grease an 8" square baking pan.

Combine cornmeal, flour, sugar, baking powder and salt in a medium bowl. Combine milk, vegetable oil and egg in a small bowl; mix well. Add milk mixture to flour mixture; stir until just combined. Pour into prepared pan.

Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until a pick inserted in the center comes out clean. Serve warm.

Stained Glass Cookies

submitted by Renee Foley

The translucent candy "windows" in these cookies represent the theme of light.

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
10 tablespoons (1 1/4 sticks) butter, softened
2/3 cup sugar
1 large egg
2 teaspoons vanilla
1/4 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest (optional)
40 fruit flavored hard candies (such as Lifesavers)

In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder and salt. In a mixer bowl, beat butter and sugar on medium speed until fluffy. Add egg, vanilla and lemon zest and beat until combined. Add flour mixture and stir until well blended and smooth. Shape dough into a log and wrap in waxed paper or plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 3 hours.

Preheat oven to 350°. On a lightly flour surface, roll dough to 1/2" thickness. Cut out with large cookie cutters, then use small cookie cutters to cut a "window" in the center of each cookie. Transfer cookies to a well greased baking sheets.

Keeping the colors separate, place candy in plastic bags and crush with a meat mallet. Place crushed candy inside window frames. Bake for 7-10 minutes, or until candy is just melted. Cool on baking sheets for 5 minutes, until candy is hard. Carefully lift cookies off baking sheet with a spatula and place on racks to cool completely.

Graham Cracker Icebox Cake

submitted by Erik Felker

This simple recipe requires no cooking and is quite easy to make. It may be a good choice for families in which a child wants to “help” with holiday preparations. It also travels well, since it remains in the baking dish in which it was made.

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Chilling time: at least two hours

Ingredients:

16-oz. package of graham crackers

2 (3.5 oz.) packages of instant vanilla pudding

3 ½ cups whole milk

8-oz container of whipped topping, thawed

additional milk

topping ingredients (see below)

Preparation:

Blend the pudding mix, whipped topping, and milk in a medium bowl. Stir until well blended, being sure to incorporate all the dry pudding mix.

Line the bottom of a 9” by 13” baking dish with a single layer of graham crackers. Leave the crackers whole. Cover the entire bottom, using broken crackers to fill the gaps if necessary. Drizzle with some of the extra milk. Spoon half of the pudding mixture over the graham crackers, then put another layer of crackers, drizzle again with milk, and put on another layer of pudding. Top with crushed graham crackers. Cover the pan with plastic wrap and chill for at least two hours so that the crackers can absorb some of the moisture of the pudding mixture and become somewhat tender. (You can control the degree of crispness or tenderness by drizzling more or less of the additional milk.) Note: Do not fill the pan to the top; leave room for the dessert’s topping.

Topping: This is a rather neutral dessert, so it lends itself well to a variety of toppings. For winter solstice, I would use thawed, carefully drained berries (especially blueberries) to make a dramatic dark/light contrast with the rest of the dessert. If you want a brighter look—and after all, in February it is summer in the southern hemisphere—I would suggest carefully drained, crushed pineapple and fresh orange chunks. For real drama, divide the top of the cake diagonally and use a light topping on one part and a dark topping on the other part—but beware of bleeding colors!

Winter Salad

submitted by Erik Felker

This salad is fun for two reasons: it allows the cook to play with textures and it amazes people because it contains pieces of ...yes, ladies and gentlemen, pieces of rutabaga.

Ingredients:

peeled rutabagas

orange chunks

chopped celery

chopped red or green bell pepper, or both

torn lettuce

dressing of choice.

Cut the rutabaga(s) into bite-size chunks. Steam them just until tender. Mix the rutabaga pieces with orange chunks, then add chopped celery and bell peppers. Serve the salad on a bed of lettuce.

The colors of the orange chunks and peppers will contrast with the neutral color of the rutabaga, and the earthy flavor of the rutabaga will be picked up and freshened by the citrus and peppers. Finally, the soft orange chunks and rutabaga chunks will benefit from the crunchiness of the celery and peppers. This salad is all about contrasts, just as the year contains its own contrasts of longer and shorter days and hotter and colder temperatures. Also, the rutabaga is a good symbol of winter, since it was previously stored in root cellars and eaten during cold weather when other vegetables were not available. The orange, on the other hand, symbolizes summer because of its color and shape, like a summer sun. All of these points might become part of the dinner conversation of a family with young children...once everyone is finished discussing soccer team scores, of course!