

An American Harvest Celebration

Serves 6-8

This Thanksgiving, revel in the joys of family cooking with a table prepared by the whole family, both young and old! These recipes for a friends and family feast honor some of the heritage foods of the North and South Americas--squash, corn, potatoes, peppers, and more!

Menu

- Braised Turkey Cassoulet
- Butternut Squash Fritters
- Mashed Potatoes & Romesco Sauce
- Lemon Polenta Cake



Topics for Dinnertime Discussion

- Share a Rose/Thorn/Bud: something you are grateful for, something that has been challenging, and something you are looking forward to
- Discuss your own family and cultural traditions, what makes them special, and what your children might imagine eventually passing on to their own descendants
- How can we practice more mindfulness and gratitude in our everyday lives? How can we act with love and kindness to be a beacon of light in a troubled and suffering world?

Braised Turkey Cassoulet

Serves ~6

Did you know--Benjamin Franklin proposed the the United State's national bird be a turkey, not an eagle? Imagine how our American culture might be different with a different symbol!

A cassoulet *is a rich, slow-cooked casserole containing meat, pork skin and white beans, originating in southern France. It is named after its traditional cooking vessel, the cassole, a deep, round, earthenware pot with slanting sides*



Skills: Sautéing and braising; kids can help chop carrots, celery herbs

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 5 turkey thighs (or 3 drumsticks and 2 thighs)
- *½ pound bacon or pancetta, diced (optional)*
- 2 large onions, diced
- 1 pound shiitake or other mushrooms, sliced
- 2 pounds carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 bunch celery, diced
- 8 cloves garlic, minced
- A few leaves sage, minced (native to the Americas) or thyme
- 3 cups turkey stock ; or more as needed ; can use a brown ale as well!
- Chopped fresh parsley for garnish (optional)
- 1 28 oz can of White beans (like cannellini)

Steps

1. Put the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat.
2. Season the turkey and brown the skin sides well (5-10 minutes). Do not overcrowd the pan, so work in batches as needed. Remove from pan and place on plate
3. *Cook bacon or pancetta (if using) in the remaining fat in the skillet until nearly crisp; remove with a slotted spoon.*
4. Cook the onions, mushrooms, carrots, celery and herbs, in batches if necessary, until beginning to brown, 10 minutes. Add a large pinch of salt and minced sage.
5. Then nestle the dark meat into the veggies. Add stock to come about one-third to halfway up the sides of the thighs. Pressure cook for 15 minutes. Let natural release 15 minutes. Internal temp of the turkey should be 160F or higher.
 - a. If not pressure cooking: Can put ingredients into a roasting pan; roast @ 300F for 90 minutes, uncovered (while checking)
6. Add butter and flour to to pan to make a simple roux (thickens the dish)
7. Add white beans and cook for 2 more minutes.
8. Taste and adjust seasoning. Add parsley as garnish
9. Serve with bread

Romesco Sauce

Yields ~2 cups

Romesco is a tomato and pepper based sauce from Catalonia, Spain invented by fishermen to be eaten with fish. Try romesco on top of mashed potatoes as a modern twist instead of gravy!

Skills: kids can measure out ingredients and blend in a food processor. Adjust to taste by seasoning alongside your kids!

6-8 servings

Ingredients

- 1 large roasted red bell pepper from a jar
- 1 garlic clove, smashed
- 1/2 cup slivered almonds, toasted
- 1/4 cup tomato purée
- 2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 2 tablespoons Sherry vinegar
- 1.5 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper



Steps:

1. Pulse first 8 ingredients in a food processor until very finely chopped. With motor running, slowly add oil; process until smooth.
2. Taste the sauce and adjust as desired with salt, pepper, spices, and vinegar
3. Serve with boiled and mashed fingerling potatoes

Butternut Squash Fritters

6-8 servings

Beans, corn, and squash make up the Three Sisters trio indigenous tribes across the Americas ate as a cornerstone of their diet. The three foods provided all the nutrients needed for a healthy diet, and grow in a mutualistic way--corn provides structure for beans to climb, and provides shade for squash. Squash's prickly leaves act as a natural insect repellent that protects the crops from unwanted pests.

These butternut squash fritters are a delicious way to bring gorgeous gourds to the table, in a crunchy and fried way the whole family is sure to love!

Skills: Grating, seasoning

Caution! Be careful when the squash is getting down to the nub!

Ingredients

- Butternut squash (about 3 pounds), peeled and shredded
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/4 teaspoon dried sage
- Pinch of nutmeg
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- Flavorless oil, plus more as needed

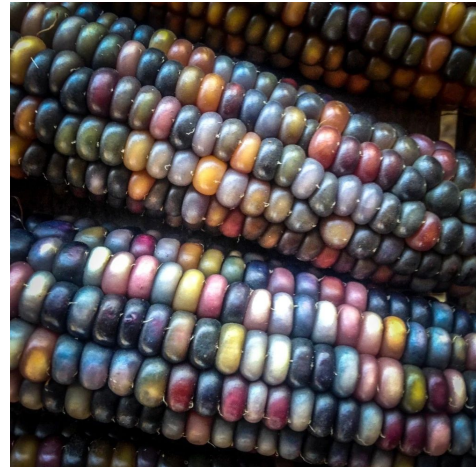
Steps

1. In a large bowl, combine butternut squash, flour, garlic, eggs, thyme, sage and nutmeg; season with salt and pepper, to taste.
2. Heat 1/3 cup oil in a large nonstick or cast iron skillet over medium high heat. Scoop 2 tbsp of batter for each fritter, flattening with a spatula, and cook until the underside is nicely golden brown, 2 mins. Flip and cook on the other side, about 1-2 mins longer.
3. Serve immediately; top with a pinch of salt, sour cream and chives

Polenta Pound Cake with Lemon Drizzle

Serves 8-12

Polenta is coarsely ground cornmeal. It is a staple seen across America from cornbread to Southern-style grits. This polenta cake is a lovely, light way to finish off your Thanksgiving meal!



Skills: measuring, mixing, separating eggs

Ingredients

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 6 large eggs separated
- 1/2 pound (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temp
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
- 1 cup yellow cornmeal, plus more for dusting the pan
- 1/4 teaspoon almond or vanilla extract
- 1 cup sour cream

For the drizzle:

- 200g (1 cup) granulated sugar
- Juice of 2 lemons

Steps

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9 1/2-by-3-inch round cake pan, then dust with a little cornmeal. Set aside.
 - a. **Or add cupcake liners into a cupcake tin (1 dozen)**
2. Mix the flour and baking soda together in a bowl. Set aside.
3. Separate eggs - be sure not to get any egg yolk in the egg whites
4. Using a hand mixer with a whisk attachment, beat the egg whites until they form stiff peaks. Transfer to another bowl and wipe out the bowl.
5. Add the butter, sugar, and lemon zest to the mixer bowl and beat at medium speed until light and fluffy, approximately 5 minutes. Add egg yolks one at a time, beating until incorporated after each addition.
6. Add the cornmeal and beat until incorporated, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary. Beat in the extract.
7. Add the flour mixture in 3 batches, alternating with sour cream.
8. Fold in the beaten egg whites. Pour batter into the prepared cake pan (or cupcake tin)
9. Bake for 1 1/2 hours, or until a skewer stuck into the center comes out clean. Cool on a rack for 15 minutes, then carefully remove the cake from the pan and cool completely on the rack.
 - a. **Or bake for ~20-25 minutes if making cupcakes**
10. Make lemon drizzle while cupcakes bake:
 - a. Mix sugar and lemon juice together
 - b. Spoon over cupcakes while still warm, but not fresh out of the oven (if too hot- the glaze will drip right off; if too cool- the glaze won't soak a little into the cake)