

## Harvest Stuffed Acorn Squash

***With 8 grams of fat and 70 milligrams of cholesterol in a 3-ounce serving—nearly as much as a 3-ounce serving of ground beef and more than twice the cholesterol as a McDonald's hamburger—turkey cannot be considered a heart-healthy food. This delicious and attractive dish is based on antioxidant—rich fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and nuts. The deep yellow of the squash flesh and the earthy tones of the stuffing create a lovely contrast, making this dish the perfect centerpiece for Thanksgiving.***

Serves 8

4 acorn squash, halved lengthwise; seeds and membrane removed (see note)  
1 cup organic brown rice  
1/2 cup wild rice  
4 cups vegetable broth or water  
1/4 teaspoon sea salt

1 TBSP olive oil  
1 medium onion, chopped  
3/4 cup diced celery  
1/2 cup pecans, coarsely chopped (you may use any nut of your preference)  
1/2 cup dried apricots, diced  
1/2 cup cranberries  
1/2 teaspoon sea salt  
2-1/2 teaspoon ground ginger  
1/8 teaspoon each ground black pepper  
1/8 teaspoon ground cardamom  
1/8 teaspoon ground cloves  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1. Preheat oven to 375° F.
2. Cook both varieties of rice together in broth or water with 1/4 teaspoon of salt (omit salt if broth is already salted).
3. Meanwhile, place squash halves, cut side down, into a large shallow baking dish or cookie sheet (you may need two). Bake for 30 minutes.
4. In a skillet, sauté onion in olive oil until it becomes transparent. Add the celery and sauté a couple of minutes. Remove from heat. Using a large mixing bowl, blend this mixture together with the cooked rice, cranberries, nuts, apricots, and remaining seasonings.
5. When done, remove the partially baked squash from the oven. Spoon out some of the cooked squash and mix it with the rest of the ingredients. Be sure to scrape only a little; you want to leave squash in the shells, too.
6. Press the rice mixture into each squash cavity, mounding rice as much as possible. (Depending on how large the squash are, you may end up with some leftover rice mixture, which makes a great side dish by itself.)
7. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 30 minutes or until squash flesh is thoroughly tender.

Note: Don't discard the nutritious squash seeds. Instead, rinse the seeds and remove the membrane. Pat dry. Spray a baking sheet with olive oil and spread the seeds evenly on the sheet. Spray seeds lightly with olive oil or with mix with Earth Balance and sprinkle with sea salt or any other favorite seasoning (optional). Bake the seeds in a 375° F. oven for about 15 minutes, or until they're golden brown. Enjoy immediately as a warm snack, or store them in an airtight container for up to one week.