

Baked Butternut Squash and Pears

Type: Side Dish

Serves: 4

Time to Prepare: 60 minutes

Ingredients

1 small butternut squash
1 tsp. of freshly ground nutmeg
¼ tsp. of salt
2 green pears, cored and chopped
¼ cup of hazelnuts
2 tbsp. of green pumpkin seeds
Juice of ½ of a lemon

Instructions

Bake the squash on 450 degrees for 35 minutes (it should have some give to it when it comes out of the oven).

Allow it to cool to the point where you can safely handle it.

Cut the squash open and remove the seeds.

Peel the squash.

Chop the squash into bite-size pieces.

Toss the squash in the nutmeg and salt.

Core the pears.

Chop them into bite-size pieces.

Juice the lemon.

Toss everything together.

Kitchen Equipment

Oven

Baking Sheet

Knife

Cutting Board

Large Spoon to remove the squash seeds

Measuring Cup

Measuring Spoon

Mixing Bowl

Presentation



I really like the colors in this dish, so I tend to serve it on a white or cream colored plate to provide a clean palate for all of the ingredients. However, if I do use a decorative plate, I only try to use one that has earthy-colored decorations along the rim.

Time Management

Don't chop the pears until the squash is baked, peeled, and chopped. Prolonged exposure to air will brown them.

Complementary Food and Drinks

My favorite dish to serve with this is a thick soup made from Arborio rice, the same type of rice used to make risotto, flavored with a touch of white wine, walnuts, and crispy sage leaves.

Where to Shop

All of the ingredients should be readily available at most markets, though I strongly suggest grating your own nutmeg. Once you try freshly grated nutmeg, the jarred, grated nutmeg tastes like cardboard! Approximate cost per serving is \$1.75.

*The Vegan Culinary Experience – Education, Inspiration, Quality** www.veganculinaryexperience.com

Recipe by Chef Jason Wyrick

How It Works

Ideally, the squash is cooked to the point where it is soft enough to peel and chop, but firm enough that it retains its shape once you cut it. It takes some practice to determine how long it should stay in the oven, which is based on its size and the extent of the bell shape. I chose green pears in this recipe because the green brightens the entire feel of the dish and the fresh, crisp pears make a nice contrast to the lush sweetness of the squash. Pumpkin seeds are used for texture and color and the hazelnuts are used for their deep flavor and solid texture. The lemon juice is used to brighten the flavors of the dish and to keep the pears from browning while they are at the table.

Chef's Notes

This is a dish that goes a long way, being very filling for a side dish.

Nutritional Facts (individual servings in parentheses, does not include any options)

Calories 767.2 (191.8)

Calories from Fat 272.4 (68.1)

Fat 30.3g (7.6g)

Total Carbohydrates 104.9g (26.2g)

Dietary Fiber 14.3g (3.6g)

Sugars 41.8g (10.4g)

Protein 18.8g (4.7g)

Salt 606mg (152mg)

Vitamin A 919% (229.8%)

Vitamin B6 40% (10%)

Vitamin C 148% (37%)

Calcium 24% (6%)

Iron 49% (12.3%)

Thiamin 39% (9.8%)

Riboflavin 16% (4%)

Niacin 28% (7%)

Folate 30% (7.5%)

Phosphorous 56% (14%)

Potassium 57% (14.3%)

Zinc 25% (6.3%)

Magnesium 86% (21.5%)

Copper 72% (18%)

Interesting Facts

Pears are one of the oldest cultivated fruits, having been eaten throughout the Celtic world for thousands of years.

Pear tree wood makes for a wonderful smoking wood for the grill.