

Super Stuffed Squash

Makes: 4 Servings

“Ethan created this recipe specifically for this contest,” says Ethan’s mom, Shannon. “Since Ethan recently discovered he liked acorn squash and is not a big fan of the purple carrots, he decided to make the squash the star of his dish. He also knew he wanted to use one of his favorite seasonings, smoked paprika. He thought about how his ingredients would go together, brainstormed ideas with his mom and grandma, and shopped for ideas and locally available ingredients that would go with the squash and pork.” He serves his Squash with a Maple--Granola Yogurt Parfait on the side.

Ingredients

- 2 acorn squash
- 2 **1/2 cups** water
- 1 **cup** brown rice
- 1 **pound** ground pork
- 1 medium onion, peeled and chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
- 1 medium sweet apple, peeled, cored, and diced
- 1 **teaspoon** smoked paprika
- Dash of cayenne, salt and freshly ground pepper
- 4 **teaspoons** olive oil
- Chopped fresh parsley

Directions

1. **Preheat the oven to 350°F.** On a large baking sheet, place the squash in the oven for 30 minutes, remove, cut in half and remove and discard the seeds. (Cooking it whole makes it much easier and safer to cut in half.) Put squash, cut-side down, back on the baking sheet with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water, for another 20 minutes or until soft.



Nutrition Information

Nutrients	Amount
Calories	631
Total Fat	30 g
Saturated Fat	10 g
Cholesterol	82 mg
Sodium	125 mg
Total Carbohydrate	66 g
Dietary Fiber	8 g
Total Sugars	5 g
Added Sugars included	N/A

2. **Meanwhile, in a large stockpot**, bring the water and the rice to a boil on medium--high heat, about 4 minutes. Cover, reduce the heat to low, and simmer for about 40 minutes, or until tender and liquid has been absorbed.

3. **In a large nonstick skillet**, warm 3 teaspoons of olive oil over medium heat and add the pork. Cook until lightly browned, about 6 minutes, then add onions, garlic, apples, smoked paprika, cayenne, salt, and pepper. Cook another 6 minutes, or until onion is soft. Add the brown rice, mix well.

4. **When squash is done**, turn cut--side up in the baking dish. Add a teaspoon of olive oil to the center of each squash half and season with salt and pepper, to taste. Divide the meat and rice mixture amongst the four squashes and fill the centers. Return to the oven for 10 minutes. Garnish with fresh chopped parsley and serve. (If your squashes are big, you may want to cut into quarters to serve.)

The 2016 Healthy Lunchtime Challenge Cookbook