

Culinary Masterpieces



I never met a butternut squash I didn't like

LAST WEEK THE STUDENTS OF THE JERUSALEM CULINARY INSTITUTE went on a gastronomic tour of the Machaneh Yehudah market in Jerusalem. The *shuk* has become rather a trendy place to frequent in the past few years, with new cafes and interesting produce at the stalls. One vendor sells only pumpkins and butternut squash, and so he is fondly known as the Pumpkin Man.

Butternut stirs up warm feelings about winter foods. It has a sweet, nutty taste and a deep orange color when it is ripe. And it is extremely versatile, used in soups, casseroles, breads, and muffins. To top it off, butternut squash is bursting with vitamin A, potassium, and fiber.

Chef Yochanan

Butternut Squash, Macaroni & Cheese

Serves 4

- 1** large butternut squash (2 lb/1 kg), peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks
- 2** teaspoons olive oil
- 1½** cups uncooked macaroni
- 4** tablespoons butter
- ½** cup flour
- 3** tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 2** cups milk
- 2** cups (200g) cheddar or other grated cheese
- ½** cup (50g) Parmesan salt and pepper, to taste

Heat oven to 400° F (220° C). Toss the squash with the olive oil and some salt and pepper, to taste. Roast on a baking sheet for 15-20 minutes until tender.

While the squash is roasting, prepare the macaroni according to the package directions. Drain the macaroni when it has finished

cooking and set aside.

Melt the butter in a pan, and stir in the flour and mustard to make a paste. Gradually whisk in the milk and simmer to thicken until the mixture becomes a smooth sauce. Stir constantly to avoid burning.

Take the sauce off the heat and mix in a third of the squash with the cheddar cheese and half of the Parmesan. Season with more salt and pepper, to taste. Stir in the macaroni with the remaining squash. Put the entire mixture into an ovenproof dish, scatter the remaining Parmesan cheese on top, and bake for 15 minutes. The top should be golden and bubbling.





Warm Roasted Squash And Lentil Salad

Serves 4

- 2** pounds (1 kg) butternut squash, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks
- 2** tablespoons olive oil
- 1** garlic clove, crushed
- 2** teaspoons thyme
salt and pepper, to taste
- 1** tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1** tablespoon whole-grain mustard*
- 2** tablespoons water
- 2** cups cooked lentils
- 1** small red onion, sliced thinly
- 4** cups fresh** spinach, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 2** cups cherry tomatoes, halved

Heat oven to 390° F (200° C).

Toss the butternut squash with 1 tablespoon olive oil, 1 crushed garlic clove, 2 teaspoons thyme, and salt and pepper to taste. Roast for 25-30 minutes or until tender.

Prepare 2 cups of cooked lentils according to the package directions.

Mix together 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar, 1 tablespoon olive oil, 1 teaspoon whole-grain mustard, and 2 tablespoons water. Drain the cooked lentils and toss with the dressing, red onion, spinach, and cherry tomatoes.

Divide the lentils among 4 plates. Top with the roasted butternut squash.

Serving suggestions: Top with cheese, sliced cucumbers, or toasted pumpkin seeds.

* You can use mustard of your choice, but I think the whole-grain adds more flavor.

** Frozen spinach changes the dish, so leave it out if fresh is not available.

Many ingredients are prone to infestation. Local Rabbanim should be consulted for specific guidelines on how to avoid transgressions related to insects.

Chef Lambiase, the scion of a long line of Italian Jewish gourmet chefs, was trained under renowned English and French chefs and has been a master chef in his own right for twenty-five years. He is the founder and director of the Jerusalem Culinary Institute, which trains students in the modern culinary arts, pastry-making and wine-tasting, to the highest kosher standards. For information about JCI, contact info@jchicof.com.

Almond-Squash- Cranberry Crumble

Serves 4-6

- 4** cups hot mashed butternut squash
- 3** tablespoons butter or margarine, softened, divided
- ¼** teaspoon salt or to taste
- ¼** teaspoon ground cinnamon
pinch ground allspice
pinch ground nutmeg
- 1** can whole-berry cranberry sauce
- ⅓** cup sliced almonds
- 3** tablespoons packed brown sugar

Prepare 4 cups of mashed butternut squash. You can bake this, boil it, or cook frozen squash.

In a large bowl, combine the squash, 2 tablespoons butter/margarine, salt, cinnamon, allspice and nutmeg. Mix well. Transfer to a greased 2-quart (8-cup) baking dish.

Stir cranberry sauce until softened; spoon over squash.

Combine almonds, brown sugar, and remaining butter; mix well. Sprinkle over cranberry sauce. Bake uncovered at 350° F (180° C) for approximately 1 hour.

