



Get to know: Butternut Squash

Butternut squash, *Cucurbita moschata*, is a type of winter squash which has a sweet nutty taste similar to that of a pumpkin. It has yellow skin, but when ripe it turns deep orange, which in turn makes it sweeter and richer. It was claimed by Charles Leggett's wife that the squash was developed by him, in Stow, Massachusetts, and then subsequently introduced by him to the researchers at the Waltham Field Station. In Australia and New Zealand the fruit is referred to as butternut pumpkin rather than squash.



Nutrition

One cup (100g) of butternut squash has 45 calories, 11.69 g of carbohydrates, 2g of fibre, and 1g of protein. With 25 calories per 1-cup raw serving, butternut squash can easily be added to your plate, without costing you too many calories. If you're trying to control your calorie intake to lose or maintain a healthy weight, veg like butternut make a good choice.

Fun Facts

Butternut squash is one of the world's longest keeping fruits. If stored and treated properly its shelf life is approximately 3 months! However, once it is opened it should be covered in foil and kept in the fridge.

Health Benefits

Butternut squash is an excellent source of vitamin A and vitamin C and has long been recognised as an important food source of carotenoids when it comes to these key antioxidants. While butternut squash should not be treated as a high-fat food, it does contain fats, including the anti-inflammatory omega-3s. One cup of baked squash will provide you with approximately 340mg of omega-3 fats in the form of alpha-linolenic acid (ALA). While that amount is only about one-third as high as the concentration of ALA found in the "best of the best" omega-3 plant foods like walnuts, it is still a valuable amount being provided by a low-fat food.

What you can try with butternut squash:

Butternut Squash with Whole Wheat, Wild Rice, & Onion Stuffing

by: veg kitchen

Serves: 8

What You Need:

- 4 medium-small butternut squashes (about 500g each)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup raw wild rice, rinsed
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large red onion, chopped
- 2 to 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups firmly packed torn whole wheat bread (use gluten-free bread if you'd like)
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds
- A few sliced fresh sage leaves (or leave whole if small), optional
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dried thyme
- Juice of 1 small orange (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup; or omit and just use more vegetable broth)
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

What to do:

1. Preheat the oven to 190C.
2. Wrap the whole squashes in foil. Place on a rack in the centre of the oven. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes, or until you can pierce through the narrow part with a knife, with a little resistance. You can do this step ahead of time. Let the squashes cool somewhat, then cut in half lengthwise, and scoop out the seeds and their surrounding fibres.
3. Meanwhile, bring 2 cups of water to a boil in a saucepan. Stir in the wild rice, reduce to a simmer, then cover and cook until the water is absorbed, about 40 minutes.
4. Heat the oil in a skillet. Add the onion and garlic and sauté until golden.
5. In a mixing bowl, combine the cooked wild rice with the sautéed onion and the remaining ingredients.
6. Scoop out the squash pulp, leaving firm shells about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick. Chop or dice the pulp and stir it into the wild rice mixture. Stuff the squashes with the mixture, place in foil-lined baking dishes, and cover.
7. Before serving, place the squash in preheated oven.
8. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, or just until well heated through.

www.vegkitchen.com/recipes/butternut-squash-with-whole-wheat-wild-rice-onion-stuffing

Rice not your thing? Try these options instead!

- Butternut Galette: www.kcet.org/living/food/the-public-kitchen/butternut-squash-galette-recipe.html
- Butternut squash and mushroom tart: www.myrecipes.com/recipe/butternut-squash-mushroom-tart
- Butternut squash pie (Gluten free): www.theculinarylife.com/2010/gluten-free-butternut-squash-pie-recipe/