

Amie's Favorite Holiday Meal

Celebration Roast with Cornbread Stuffing and Gravy

Serves 8 - 10

This is a dish you'll look forward to all year long, the perfect centerpiece for Thanksgiving and other holiday celebrations. Thanks to Matthew Schmidt, proprietor of the Tofu Shop in Arcata, California for the original version of this recipe, published in East West Magazine in November 1986. This recipe can easily be made gluten-free by using gluten-free tamari and making your cornbread gluten-free.

Celebration Roast

5 pounds tofu, medium or firm
1 cup baked winter squash, mashed
2 teaspoons homemade seasoning (see below)

Homemade Seasoning

¼ cup fresh sage, stemmed & chopped fine
2 T fresh marjoram, thyme, and rosemary (use fresh if possible, it makes a big difference), stemmed & chopped fine
1 T celery seed
1 T black pepper

Cornbread Stuffing

2 T water (or optionally, 1 T oil)
1 cup onions, diced
1 cup mushrooms, diced
1 cup celery, diced
2 large cloves garlic, minced
1 T homemade seasoning
¼ cup tamari (wheat-free)
4 cups cornbread, cut into ½ inch cubes (recipe below)
½ cup parsley, chopped

Basting Liquid

¼ – ½ cup toasted sesame oil
2 T – ¼ cup tamari (wheat-free)

Mushroom Gravy

2 T water (or optionally, 1 T oil)
2 onions, diced
6 cups mushrooms, sliced
1 cup whole wheat flour (brown rice flour)
5-6 cups water, more if needed
¾ cup tamari (wheat-free)

Garnish

1 large sprig parsley, and/or fresh sage



Clockwise from top: Celebration Roast covered in Mushroom Gravy, Cornbread, Stuffing, Vegan Mac & Cheeze (recipe not included), Green Bean Casserole (recipe not included), Kale Salad (recipe not included), and in the middle, Cranberry Sauce. Not pictured: Sesame-Roasted Butternut Squash.

A Note from Amie: These recipes are among my favorites for the holidays. I can't wait to make them year after year, and at the holiday dinners I attend, I'm always asked for the recipes. I hope you will enjoy them too. The Celebration Roast can become a new tradition instead of turkey. There is much festivity in putting it together, the big moment of truth when flipping it, it includes stuffing and gravy, and it takes 2 hours to bake, filling your home with delicious aromas. You can see a step-by-step picture guide to making the Celebration Roast at www.clubveg.org/recipe. Except for the basting liquid for the Celebration Roast, and the Toasted Sesame Oil in the Sesame-Roasted Butternut Squash, everything can be made oil-free. Enjoy!

Instructions

To prepare homemade seasoning, simply mix ingredients well.

Mash tofu well. Add winter squash and seasoning mix and mix together well (using your hands is easiest!)

Line a colander (approximately 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ wide including lip) with a single layer of moistened cheesecloth. Place something under the colander to collect the liquid that will press out. Transfer tofu mixture to colander. Press tofu to compress and flatten the top and fold edges of cheesecloth over it. Place a cake tin or other flat object over the surface of the tofu and weigh it down with a heavy object (about 5 pounds – such as several cans of beans) to press liquid from tofu for one hour.

To prepare stuffing, heat water (or oil) and sauté onions, mushrooms, celery, and garlic. Sprinkle homemade seasoning over vegetables. Add tamari. Stir, cover, and continue to cook until vegetables are done, about five minutes. Add cornbread cubes and parsley and mix well.

Hollow out tofu to within one inch of the colander, placing the tofu you remove in a bowl. Pack in stuffing and cover with the tofu you removed. Pat down so the surface is flat and firm.

Line a roasting pan with parchment paper or lightly oil and flip filled tofu onto the roasting pan so the flat surface faces down. Remove cheesecloth. (Hint: put the roasting pan over top of colander, then flip)

Mix basting liquid and brush tofu with it, then cover the tofu with the roasting pan lid or with tinfoil. Bake at 400 F. for 45 minutes. Remove lid or foil, baste, and return to oven to bake uncovered until tofu becomes golden brown, about 45 minutes more. Baste halfway through.

To prepare gravy, heat water (or oil) and sauté onions and mushrooms. Mix flour with water (hint: mix one cup flour with one cup water first, then add the rest of the water.) Bring to boil over high heat, stirring often, then simmer uncovered over medium heat for one-half hour, stirring occasionally.

Using two spatulas, transfer Celebration Roast onto a serving platter. Serve gravy on the side.

Cornbread

Serves 9

Ingredients:

- 1 cup unsweetened non-dairy milk of choice (oat, almond, or soy work well)
- 1 Tablespoon white or cider vinegar
- 6 Tablespoons applesauce
- 1 1/3 cups frozen corn, defrosted
- 1 cup cornmeal
- 1 cup whole wheat pastry flour, or gluten-free flour
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- 3 Tablespoons pure maple syrup or your favorite sweetener of choice (optional)

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Line with parchment paper or grease a 9" x 9" pan.
2. In a two cup measuring cup or small mixing bowl, whisk together all liquid ingredients (including applesauce) and, if using soymilk let sit 10 minutes or more.*
3. Pour defrosted corn into a food processor and blend until pureed, or mostly pureed. Stir into liquid ingredients and mix until thoroughly combined.
4. In medium or large mixing bowl, combine all dry ingredients: cornmeal, flour, baking powder, and optionally, sugar. Mix wet ingredients into this and stir well.
5. Pour batter into the pan, and bake 35 – 40 minutes (20 minutes for muffins). The recipe texture is much better the second day, so let sit overnight—very loosely covered—before tasting if possible.

**Adding vinegar to soymilk will make the equivalent of buttermilk, and this results in a moister and more tender (as it breaks down strands of gluten in the flour) cornbread. This process takes at least 10 minutes.*

Cranberry Sauce

This is a holiday favorite. It is very flavorful, fat-free, and easy to prepare. Because of the agar flakes, it has the consistency of a firm "jello."

6 half cup servings

Ingredients:

2 cups cranberries

1 1/2 cups apple juice

1/3 cup pure maple syrup

1/4 cup agar flakes (or slightly less, depending how firm you want it)

Instructions:

Sort through cranberries, then rinse, drain, and measure. In a medium saucepan, bring all the ingredients to a boil, stir, then simmer uncovered until agar completely dissolves (about 5 minutes), stirring occasionally. Puree and pour into a bowl or mold to gel, about one hour at room temperature. You can also cool in the refrigerator. Refrigerate leftovers.

~ Slightly modified from an article in East West Journal, November, 1986.

Sesame-Roasted Butternut Squash

Yield: 8 servings

This super simple recipe is mouthwateringly delicious!
The hardest part is cutting the squash.

Ingredients:

2.5 lbs. Butternut squash
1 Tbsp. Toasted sesame oil
1 Tbsp. Soy sauce (gluten-free)

Garnish (optional):

Toasted black or white sesame seeds
Fresh parsley, chopped

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 400 F. Peel and seed squash, then cut into 1-inch chunks, toss with sesame oil and soy sauce. Spread out on a parchment covered baking sheet and roast in the oven for about 30 minutes or until tender. Serve garnished with sesame seeds and chopped parsley.

From *Professional Vegetarian Cooking* by Ken Bergeron