

Pumpkin

Winter • Fall



General Information

Pumpkin is a warm-season vegetable that can be grown throughout much of the United States. They are amongst the most popular types of the squash family. Often used as an ornament, the large jack-o lantern variety has become a national symbol for

Halloween although it is very edible. Besides being used as jack-o'-lanterns at Halloween, pumpkins are used to make pumpkin butter, pies, custard, bread, cookies and soup.

Health Benefits

They are rich in vitamin A, or beta carotene for healthy skin, vision and bone development. It is also rich in potassium,

Storing & Cooking Information

Selection: Select heavy unblemished pumpkin that is free of cracks and soft spots and has a deep orange color. Harvest with at least an inch of stem remaining or it will decay quickly.

Preparation: To open, place the pumpkin on newspaper and insert the tip of a chef knife or break it open by cracking on a hard surface. Scoop out the strings and seeds and discard, unless you plan to roast the seeds. Wash each section and use a sharp paring knife or vegetable to peel the large pieces. The pieces can be baked unpeeled as well.

Boiling/Steaming Method: Cut the pumpkin into rather large chunks. Rinse in cold water. Place pieces in a large pot with about a cup of water. The water does not need to cover the pumpkin pieces. Cover the pot and boil for 20 to 30 minutes or until tender, or steam for 10 to 12 minutes. Check for doneness by poking with a fork. Drain the cooked pumpkin in a colander. Reserve the liquid to use as a base for soup.

Oven Method: Cut pumpkin in half, scraping away stringy mass and seeds. Rinse under cold water. Place pumpkin, cut side down on a large cookie sheet. Bake at 350°F for one hour or until fork tender.

Microwave Method: Cut pumpkin in half, place cut side down on a microwave safe plate or tray. Microwave on high for 15 minutes, check for doneness. If necessary continue cooking at 1-2 minute intervals until fork tender.

Storing: Pumpkins should not be stored in the refrigerator or in a damp place. Moisture causes rapid deterioration. Whole unblemished pumpkin can be stored for 3 to 6 months at 45 to 50 degree temperatures.

Turkey Pumpkin Chili

Yield: 6 servings

Cook time: 45 minutes



Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons **olive oil**
- 1 **onion** finely chopped (1 cup)
- 2 **carrots** finely chopped (1- 1 1/2 cups)
- 2 stalks **celery** finely chopped
- 2 **garlic cloves** finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon ground **coriander**
- 1 tablespoon ground **paprika**
- 1 teaspoon ground **cumin**
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed **red chili**
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly **ground black pepper**
- 1 1/2 pounds ground **turkey**
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh **thyme rosemary or sage** (or a mixture)
- 1 15-ounce can **pumpkin purée**
- 2 15-ounce cans **cannellini beans**, drained
- 2 cups low-sodium **chicken or vegetable broth**
- Kosher **salt**
- 1/2 cup **heavy whipping cream**

Preparation

1. Pour the oil into a 4 or 5 quart soup pot or Dutch oven and place over medium heat. Add the onion, carrots and celery and cook until the vegetables are softened, stirring occasionally.
2. Add the garlic and all the spices through the black pepper, stirring to coat in the oil. Add the turkey and cook until it's no longer pink, stirring and breaking the meat up with a spoon, about 8 minutes.
3. Add the herbs, pumpkin, beans, broth and 2 teaspoons salt. Bring to a simmer, partially cover and cook 25 minutes, adjusting the heat so it doesn't boil.