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Stuffed Zucchini Logs

INGREDIENTS

- 1 onion
- 1 cup short grain brown rice
- 1/2 cup canned chickpeas rinsed and drained
- 1/2 tsp allspice
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 6-8 skinny green zucchini squash

SAUCE:

- 8 dried apricots
- 2 tsp mint
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1 heaping tsp salt
- 1/2 cup maple syrup
- 1 cup lemon juice
- 1 cup water
- 1 tbsp apricot preservatives-optional

DIRECTIONS

1. Sauté onion on med-high heat, add 1 cup rice and sauté together. Then add 1 1/2 cups boiling water and salt.
2. While rice is cooking, wash and peel the squash, leaving stripes of the green peel.
3. Cut squash in 1/2 lengthwise and scoop out insides with a spoon.
4. In a bowl mix cooked rice, chick peas, allspice and olive oil, then fill the squash.
5. Line baking dish with stuffed squash in one layer.
6. Sprinkle dried apricots on top along with crush garlic, salt and mint.

For sauce: In a bowl mix water, fresh lemon juice, maple syrup and 1 tbsp. apricot preserves. Taste and adjust to your liking. Pour over stuffed squash and cover with aluminum foil lined with parchment paper and put it in the oven at 350°F. Cook for 1 -1.5 hours.

SNACK IT UP

You could bring out carrots and cauliflower (boring), or you could wow people with these tasty delights.



Eggplant Roll-Ups

INGREDIENTS

- 2 medium long eggplants
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup ricotta cheese
- 1 cup pesto sauce
- 2 tsp lemon juice

Homemade Pesto (combine all in food processor):

- 2 cups packed fresh basil leaves
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1/3 cup pine nuts
- 2/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tsp lemon juice

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat stove-top grill pan or outdoor grill to high heat.
2. Cut the eggplants lengthwise into 1/4-inch thick slices (about 6 slices each eggplant).
3. Brush the eggplant slices evenly with olive oil on both sides.

4. Grill the eggplant slices in batches for 2-3 minutes each side, then let cool.

5. Mix ricotta cheese, pesto and lemon juice together in a small bowl and spread a heaping tablespoon of the mixture evenly over each eggplant slice.

6. Roll up the eggplant slices, place on a plate seam-side down and serve!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

About Franci Cohen

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Franci is a certified nutritionist, personal trainer and exercise physiologist in Brooklyn, NY.