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by Liz Robb

Stuffed Vegetable Marrow

Ingredients

3 medium or 2 large onions 25g butter
2 tablespoons of olive oil
100g soft bread
A few sprigs of fresh sage
1 egg
Salt
Black pepper
1 vegetable marrow

Preparation

1. 1. Preheat the oven to 190 degrees or 170 degrees fan oven.
2. 2. Peel and finely chop the onions. Heat the butter and a tablespoon of olive oil then sauté the onions over a low heat for about 5 minutes, so that they are soft but not browned.
3. 3. Break the bread into pieces, [white or brown bread, as long as it's soft], then put it in a food processor to make breadcrumbs. Pull the leaves from the sage stems and chop them finely. Tip the breadcrumbs and the chopped sage into a large bowl and mix together. Season well with salt and black pepper.
4. 4. Beat an egg in a small bowl then stir it into the stuffing to bind it together.
5. 5. Drizzle a tablespoon of olive oil into a roasting tin and put it to warm in the oven. Cut 6 rings from the marrow, about 3 to 4 centimetres thick, and cut out the seeds and the soft fibrous centres. Leave the skins on
6. you may not want to eat them but they hold the marrow together when it's cooking. Cook the rings quickly in a large pan of boiling water, for no more than a minute or two.
7. 6. Lift out the marrow rings, blot them on kitchen towel and place them in the warmed roasting tin. Spoon the stuffing in to fill the centre of each marrow ring. Brush the edge of the marrow lightly with olive oil, or use an oil spray, then bake for 30-35 minutes or until the top of the stuffing is crispy and brown and the marrow is soft.
8. What else can you do with vegetable marrows?
9. - Stuff roasted marrow with a spicy vegetable ratatouille.
10. - Make a thick sauce with mature cheddar cheese, pour it over lightly cooked marrow, top with breadcrumbs and grated cheese and bake or grill until crispy and golden on top.
11. - Stuff rings of marrow with a thick tasty bolognaise, made with minced beef, or with quorn mince as a vegetarian alternative.
12. - Add pieces of marrow to a mixture of other vegetables, as you would squash, such as carrots and parsnips or aubergines and red onions, to make roasted vegetables.

Cooks Note

August and September are the months for finding vegetable marrows in our supermarkets, although they are not the most popular vegetables these days, with many people preferring the smaller, thinner-skinned courgettes from the same family.

I think it's a vegetable that shouldn't be ignored though. A marrow is incredibly versatile, you can roast, boil, steam or fry it; marrows are inexpensive and can feed a multitude, although the smaller ones are preferable to the really big ones; and, most of all, the flesh has a delicious mild flavour, perfect in partnership with a variety of contrasting strong flavours.

This is a very simple vegetarian side dish of roasted rings of marrow filled with sage and onion stuffing. It was my absolute favourite when I was a child, served with a roast chicken

Sunday dinner, with lashings of gravy, fresh vegetables and crispy roast potatoes! <