

Stuffed Delicata Squash with Quinoa, Pomegranate and Pistachios

Catherine Brown, plant-based chef & culinary nutritionist at [A Seat at My Table](#)



Total Time: 35-75 minutes Prep Time: 10-15 minutes, depending on chosen ingredients Bake/Cook Time: 25-50 minutes, depending on grain used

Here's what you'll need to make 4 side-dish servings (as shown above and farther down below)

- 2 cups quinoa, cooked (white, red or tri-colored)
- 2 delicata squash
- 1 large or two medium baking apples
- 1 large shallot or 1/2 a purple onion
- 1/2 cup fresh pomegranate arils
- 1/4-1/2 cup unsweetened apple cider
- 1-2 Tbsp fresh herbs (rosemary, thyme, sage, parsley all work well)
- 1 lemon, zest and juice (optional)
- 1/4 cup pistachios, toasted

Since these stuffed delicata contain no meat or dairy, they only need to be baked once. The stuffing can be made while the delicata squash bakes. If you'd like to make these in advance, you can bake the squash and make the stuffing ahead and store separately in the refrigerator - just wait until serving to add the nuts and pomegranate arils so the nuts stay crisp and the arils fresh. Briefly reheat before serving.

The Process:

1. Preheat oven to 375F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Wash and dry each squash, cut lengthwise and scoop out the seeds and pulp.
2. Lightly salt & pepper each half and place cut side down on the parchment lined baking sheet. Bake for 25 minutes, or until soft and edges have browned. Baking cut side down allows them to steam a bit,

cutting down on baking time. This also develops nice caramelization around the edges without using any oil.

3. While the squash cooks, prepare the quinoa according to your package directions (if you haven't already made it).
4. Wash, dry, core and dice the apple/s and shallot (or purple onion).
5. Heat a non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add 1/4 cup apple cider, the shallots, apples, minced herbs and salt & pepper to taste. Sauté until tender, 5-6 minutes, adding more apple cider to prevent sticking if needed.
6. Once the quinoa is ready, fluff it with a fork to loosen then add the apple mixture, lemon zest and juice and half of the pomegranate arils. Mix to combine, taste and adjust seasoning if needed. You can mix in the toasted pistachios too, but to retain their crispiness it's better if sprinkled on top.
7. Once the baked delicata squash have cooled slightly, fill each half with 1/4 of the mixture (you may have some left over depending on the size of your delicata) and sprinkle with the remaining pomegranate arils and toasted pistachios. Enjoy! These are delicious just as they are OR served with a small pitcher of my Orange Ginger Dressing or my Lemony Garlic Dressing.

Now, check down below for ways to change this combination up and create your own stuffing mixture!

The Squash Stuffing Formula:

2 parts whole grain

1.5 part sautéed veg and/or fruit*

1/4-1/3 part toasted nuts

1/8-1/4 part fresh herbs

* the smaller the size of the squash you'll be stuffing, the smaller the dice of fruits and veg should be to keep from over-powering and match the scale.

Optional:

1/4 part dried fruit

1 part cooked white beans or cubed plant-based sausage (1/2 tsp dried fennel seeds and 1 tsp rubbed sage pair deliciously here)

Note: traditional bread stuffing works well for filling squash halves too, but I encourage you to venture into the delicious world of whole grains (those NOT ground and baked into bread)!

Whole Grains for Stuffing Squash:

- wild rice (not actually a true grain but a seed)
- black or forbidden rice
- burgundy, brown or volcano rice
- kamut
- hulled (not pearled) barley
- millet
- farro
- buckwheat or kasha
- freekeh or wheat bulgur

Fresh and Dried Fruits for Stuffing Squash:

- apples
- pears
- pomegranate arils
- oranges, membranes removed
- cranberries, dried or fresh
- dried currants
- golden raisins
- dried apricots
- figs

Vegetables to Use for Stuffing Squash:

- onions, shallots or leeks
- garlic
- celery
- eggplant
- peppers
- fennel bulb

- mushrooms
- fire roasted tomatoes
- dark leafy greens
- Brussels sprouts or cabbage
- root veg: beets, carrots, parsnips, rutagaba

Some Herbs and Seasonings to Use for Stuffing Squash (fresh or dried):

- rosemary
- thyme
- sage
- oregano, Greek or Mexican*
- mint*
- fennel seed
- cumin seed
- celery seed*
- caraway seeds*
- cinnamon
- allspice*
- nutmeg*

* these are stronger spices, use in smaller quantities

These are just some ideas to get you thinkin' outside of butter and brown sugar when considering roasted winter squash. The possibilities are nearly endless!

Be sure to show me what you make! Tag me #chefcatherinebrown - I LOVE seeing what you make!