



FROM OUR *FLAVORS OF THE SOUTHERN COAST* COOKBOOK

Picadillo Stuffed Acorn Squash

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS

2 acorn squash, each 1 ¼ lb./570 g

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

PICADILLO

2 Tbsp olive oil

1 yellow onion, chopped

1 small green bell pepper, cored, seeded, and chopped

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 lb. or 455 g ground round beef (85% lean)

2 Roma (plum) tomatoes, seeded and chopped

1 tsp ground cumin

1 tsp dried oregano

1 tsp kosher salt

¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper

¼ tsp red pepper flakes

1/8 tsp ground cinnamon

1 bay leaf

1 Tbsp tomato paste

¾ cup or 180 ml hot water

1/3 cup or 50 g sliced pimiento-stuffed olives

1/3 cup or 60 g seedless raisins

2 Tbsp chopped fresh cilantro or flat-leaf parsley, for serving

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To roast the acorn squash: Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat the oven to 425°F/220°C. Oil a roasting pan large enough to hold the acorn squash halves.
2. Cut each squash in half lengthwise through its stem and scoop out the seeds. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Place the squash halves, cut side down, in the prepared pan. Add ½ cup/120 ml water and tightly cover the pan with aluminum foil. Roast until the squash is tender when pierced with the tip of a small sharp knife, 30–40 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, make the picadillo: Heat 1 Tbsp of the oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the onion, bell pepper, and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 3 minutes. Transfer to a plate and tent with aluminum foil to keep warm.
4. Heat the remaining 1 Tbsp oil in the skillet. Add the ground beef and cook, stirring occasionally and breaking up the meat with the side of the spoon, until it loses its raw look, about 5 minutes. Drain off the excess fat. Stir in the tomatoes and cook for 1 minute. Stir in the cumin, oregano, salt, black pepper, red pepper flakes, cinnamon, and bay leaf. Dissolve the tomato paste in the hot water, add to the skillet, and stir well. Reduce the heat to medium-low. Simmer, stirring occasionally, until the liquid has evaporated and the picadillo is well flavored, about 30 minutes. During the last 5 minutes, stir in the olives and raisins. Discard the bay leaf.
5. Place each acorn squash, cut side up, in a wide soup bowl. Divide the picadillo among the squash, filling each one with a heaping portion. Sprinkle with the cilantro and serve.