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Looking For Something New to Do with Those Thanksgiving Leftovers?

By *Susie Iventosch*

Just like Congress, we have a divided family when it comes to certain issues. And around Thanksgiving, one of those issues is certain to be sweet potatoes. I love them, but my husband despises them simply because they are ... sweet. I'd like to ask what he expects from "sweet" potatoes and he'd like to filibuster the motion of serving them at all. In the end, we usually reach across the aisle. I serve them, but try to make them less sweet, and he politely abstains. This savory recipe calls for chunks of sweet potatoes and yams, mixed with onions and seasoned with sage, poultry seasoning, salt and pepper. Baked for a little over an hour at 350 degrees, they are nice and crunchy on the outside, and soft on the inside. Perfect. But, still his response, "They are too sweet!"

Perhaps you'll have better luck serving these delicious root veggies to your family. But, if they don't gobble them up on Thanksgiving, you can always disguise them in soup the next day! Served with a little leftover stuffing, this makes a hearty meal for Friday. Oh, and if you tell 'em it's butternut squash ... they just might like it!

On another leftover note, my good friend, Mary MacDowell, visited us from Dallas a couple of weeks ago. She presented this delicious mascarpone-browned butter sage pasta dish. She served it as a side dish, but I prefer it as the main dish served with a light salad and crunchy French bread. She used panko (Japanese bread crumbs) for the topping, but I tried it with wheat germ mixed with breadcrumbs and a little grated Parmesan and it turned out great. Then I tried it with leftover turkey mixed into the dish, and it was even better!

Wheat germ is actually the heart of the wheat kernel and is packed in protein, fiber, polyunsaturated fat, vitamins and minerals. Not only is it delicious, especially when toasted, there are also many benefits to wheat germ. For example, it is said to lower cholesterol, fight colon cancer, improve digestion, protect the heart and help to prevent strokes. Sounds pretty good to me!

Sweet potatoes and yams roasted with red onion and sage

2 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1½ to 2-inch chunks

2 large yams, peeled and cut into same large chunks

1 large red onion, peeled and sliced

2 tablespoon olive oil

2 teaspoons dried sage, or ¼ cup fresh sage, snipped into tiny pieces

2 teaspoons poultry seasoning

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon black pepper

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9x13 inch baking dish.

In a large bowl, toss sweet potatoes, yams and onions with olive oil. Sprinkle seasoning over all and toss until well distributed.

Place mixture in casserole or baking dish and bake, uncovered for at least one hour, until edges of sweet potatoes and yams become well browned and begin to get crunchy. Serve warm.



Sweet Potato-yam soup

The ingredients for this soup are approximate, because it will depend upon how much of the sweet potatoes you have leftover from Thanksgiving dinner. Take the leftover roasted sweet potato-yam dish and puree it in the food processor. I had approximately 2 cups of this mixture.

Add:

2 cups chicken broth

¼ cup cream

Mix well and heat through on stove just until soup begins to boil. Thin as needed with extra chicken broth or cream. Serve at once and drizzle ¼ cup plain yogurt, thinned with 2 tablespoons milk or chicken broth over hot soup in a pretty little pattern.



Mary Mac's Mascarpone Mac 'n Cheese with turkey and browned butter sage-parmesan crust

(Serves 4-6 as main dish)

Ingredients

16 ounces large pasta shells
1-2 cups leftover turkey meat,
cut into bite-sized pieces

Sauce

1 tablespoon olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup mascarpone cheese
1 cup Parmesan, grated
Salt and white pepper to taste

Topping

4 tablespoons butter
1/4 cup fresh sage, finely chopped
1/2 cup wheat germ
1/2 cup dried bread crumbs (or panko)
1/2 cup grated Parmesan
1/2 teaspoon white pepper
1/2 teaspoon sea salt to taste

Directions

Preheat oven to 350F. Grease a 9x13 baking dish.

Cook pasta according to package directions; drain, reserving 1/2 cup of pasta water and keep warm.

In a large heavy pot on medium heat, warm olive oil and garlic and cook until garlic just starts to turn golden. Remove the garlic and discard. Reduce heat to low and stir in the Mascarpone and parmesan cheese until all is combined. Use some of the pasta water to achieve desired consistency in the sauce. Add the cooked pasta and turkey to the sauce and toss until all is combined. Pour into prepared dish.

In a large skillet over medium, melt butter and add the sage. Cook the sage until the butter starts to brown and bubble. Add the wheat germ and bread crumbs and stir until all is combined and crumbs are moistened with the sage butter. Remove from heat and stir in grated Parmesan.

Sprinkle topping over pasta and bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until the topping is beginning to brown.



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