

DECEMBER IS WINTER SQUASH MONTH

Winter squash is a type of gourd that is typically harvested in the late summer or early fall. It comes in many shapes, sizes, and colors, but some of the most popular varieties include acorn squash, Butternut squash, and spaghetti squash.

There are tons of nutritional benefits to eating winter squash. They're a good source of vitamins A, C, and E, as well as minerals like potassium, magnesium, and zinc, all nutrients that play important roles in our health.

Vitamin A is essential for healthy vision and skin. It also helps keep our immune system functioning properly.

Vitamin C is important for wound healing and fighting infection. It also helps us absorb iron from food.

Vitamin E is a powerful antioxidant that helps protect our cells from damage. It also supports our cardiovascular health.

Potassium is important for maintaining blood pressure and fluid balance. It also helps maintain muscle function.

Magnesium is needed for energy production and protein synthesis. It also helps muscles and nerves function properly.

Zinc is necessary for cell growth and division. It also supports the immune system and reproductive health.

Winter squash is also a good source of fiber, which helps to keep digestive systems running smoothly.

Winter squash is botanically classified as a fruit! This is because it develops from a flower and has seeds on the inside.

Types of Winter Squash



Winter squashes are uniquely beautiful with ribbed or bumpy skins, irregular shapes, and vibrant colours ranging from yellow to orange to dark green or even multi-toned.

Purée it!

Prepare pasta for mac & cheese as usual, drain pasta and fold in puréed butternut squash, and cheese. Top with breadcrumbs & bake for 20 mins.

Squash it!

You can substitute squash for mashed potatoes or combine the two for extra vegetable goodness.

Stuff it!

Stuff your favourite roasted squash halves with quinoa, cranberries and kale, or sausage and mushrooms or rice and peas! Create your own stuffing.

Bake it!

Cut butternut squash into fries, sprinkle with paprika, salt & pepper and bake for 45 mins.

MAPLE GLAZED ROASTED ACORN SQUASH

Ingredients

- 1 acorn squash, seeded and sliced
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons light brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup maple syrup, warmed
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

- Preheat oven to 375°
- Place squash sliced onto a baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil. Season with salt and pepper and gently toss together.
- Sprinkle tops of squash with brown sugar.
- Roast squash for 35-40 minutes occasionally tossing around, gently, to avoid sticking.
- 7-10 minutes before roasting is complete, brush a small amount of maple syrup over each piece of squash and finish roasting.
- Serve warm.

BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUFFLE BITES

*makes about 15 mini souffles

Ingredients

- 3 eggs
- 1 cup roasted and puréed (fork-mashed) butternut squash
- Pinch cinnamon
- Freshly ground black pepper & a pinch of salt

Directions

- Preheat oven to 350°
- Whisk eggs in a medium bowl, then add squash purée, cinnamon, salt and pepper. Whisk again until the mixture is smooth.
- Spoon or pour souffle batter carefully into a nonstick mini muffin tin. Grease the muffin tin with a bit of olive oil to ensure there is no sticking.
- Bake for 15 minutes, or until centres have puffed up and set.