

Thanksgiving Dressing

Tonight make a dinner of leftovers and clean out your fridge. You'll need refrigerator space as you prepare Thanksgiving dinner, and also to store leftovers after the feast.

Whether you're cooking all or a portion of the dinner tomorrow, I've laid out the progression of the dinner preparations for the next two days.

Start tonight by making the dressing. If you're going plant-based you won't be stuffing a bird. The dressing gets cooked in a separate pan or casserole dish. Cook it tonight and simply reheat it tomorrow. It may require a couple of 9X13 pans. **Preparation time: 1 hour and 40 minutes - Servings: 6-8**

Prep Your Ingredients!

Notes on Organizing

Prep and organize ingredients before you begin cooking. Prep a total of 2 C. chopped onion: 1/2 C. for the stovetop sausage and 1-1/2 C. for the dressing. Toast the almonds as part of the prep.

Stovetop Sausage

2 tsp. olive oil
1 clove garlic (smashed and chopped)
1/2 C. yellow onion (chopped)
1 lb. plant-based ground meat, ground beef or ground turkey breast

Seasoning for any choice of Ground Meat:

1/4 tsp. ground sage
1/4 tsp. dried rosemary
1 tsp. dried basil leaves
1 tsp. dried oregano leaves

1/3 C. low-sodium vegetable broth

Spice Combo for Dressing

1 T. dried oregano leaves
1 T. dried basil leaves
1 tsp. dried sage leaves or 1/2 tsp. ground sage
1/2 tsp. dried thyme leaves

Dressing

1 tsp. olive oil
1-1/2 C. onion (chopped)
1-1/2 C. celery (chopped)
2/3 C. red bell peppers (chopped)

1 tart apple (cored and chopped)
Stovetop Sausage (above)
1 C. slivered almonds (toasted)
1 bag dried, unseasoned bread
1 can sliced water chestnuts (drained)
1 C. dried cranberries
spice combo (above)

2 eggs
plus
2 egg whites
2-4 C. low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth

Let's Prep, Cook, and Plate This!

Basic Assembly Instructions

This dressing will be baked as a casserole. Once you've got the meat portion cooked, The rest is simple assembly.

Stovetop Sausage

1. Heat measured olive oil in a large sauté pan and brown garlic and 1/2 C. chopped onion with plant-based product or meat of choice.
2. Mix Seasoning for Ground Meat in a small bowl and sprinkle over the meat/onions mixture after it browns.
3. Add broth and continue cooking until all liquid cooks away. Remove from pan and set aside in a large bowl.

Preheat oven to 350°.

Spice Combo for Dressing

Combine oregano, basil, sage and thyme leaves in a small dish and set aside.

Dressing

1. Toss 1-1/2 C. chopped onion, celery and bell pepper in oil until onion begins to turn translucent.
2. Add chopped apple to the pan and toss for about a minute to heat through.
3. Remove from burner, toss above ingredients in large bowl with Stovetop Sausage mixture.
4. Add toasted almonds, dried bread, water chestnuts, cranberries and spice combo to the bowl.
5. Whisk eggs and egg whites together in a separate bowl with about 2 C. of the broth. Pour liquid over dressing ingredients in the large bowl. Mix well with hands until well blended. Add 1 more C. broth to the mixture and mix well. (If the mixture seems too dry, add more broth.)
6. Transfer all ingredients to a couple of oiled 9X12 baking dishes, and cover with foil. Slide into preheated 350° oven and cook for 1 hour.
7. Remove from oven and let cool on racks. Store in fridge for tomorrow.
8. Tomorrow, sprinkle about 1/4 C. broth over each of the dressing pans just before you wish to warm them. Cover and warm for 20 minutes in 300° oven after turkey finishes cooking.

What I've Learned from this Recipe

The spice we usually associate with Thanksgiving dressing is sage. The remainder of what we call "dressing" is what we put into it. (Kind of like making a curry.)

This dressing happens to be a favorite combination of mine. Your family may have a favorite recipe that brings back fond memories. If so make that one.

Let us know what you think and ask any questions you may have. chezdon@plate6.com