

# Easy Microwave Acorn Squash

Make a few punctures in the squash with the tip of a sharp knife.

For cubed squash- Cook squash whole in microwave oven for 4 minutes. Turn over and cook for 4 more minutes or until softened. Remove from microwave and let cool. (This is important, it will be HOT!) Cut softened squash in half and remove seeds. Cut each half into quarters. Using a spoon, separate the flesh from the skin and cut into cubes.

For mashed squash- Use the same method as above. Once skinned, place squash in a microwave safe dish, cover, and microwave another 5 minutes or until soft. Mash the squash in a bowl with a potato masher.

## Health Benefits of Acorn Squash

Organic Facts  
www.organicfacts.net



Boosts immune system



Aids in preventing cancer



Helps to prevent cognitive disorders



Reduces risk of osteoporosis and helps in strengthening of bones



Prevents macular degeneration and development of cataracts



Helps to prevent diabetes, atherosclerosis, strokes and heart attacks



Aids in eliminating constipation, diarrhea, cramping and bloating



Beneficial for reducing stress on heart and lowering blood pressure



Reduces appearance of wrinkles, blemishes and age spots



### Minerals\*

Potassium 10%  
Manganese 8%  
Magnesium 8%  
Iron 4%

### Vitamins\*

Vitamin C 18%  
Thiamin 9%  
Vitamin B6 8%  
Vitamin A 7%

### Nutrients\*

Dietary Fiber 6%  
Carbohydrate 3%  
Calories 2%  
Protein 2%

\*% Daily Value per 100g. For e.g. 100g of acorn squash (raw) provides 18% of daily requirement of vitamin C.

## Today's Recipe

### Black Bean & Acorn Squash Chili

This recipe is vegetarian, but could be adapted with the addition of 1 pound of ground beef, veal, or pork. Just brown and drain it and throw it in the pot!

1 large yellow onion, chopped  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 teaspoon sugar  
1 can black beans, drained  
1 can pinto beans, drained  
1 sixteen ounce can crushed tomatoes  
1 sixteen ounce can diced tomatoes  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon chili powder  
1 teaspoon cumin  
1 teaspoon paprika  
1 acorn squash cubed (use microwave method)  
a few tablespoons sour cream (for garnish)

Using a large pot, saute onion and garlic in olive oil until lightly browned. Add in the sugar. Saute for another minute or so.

Dump in the rest of the ingredients and simmer on low for at 1 and ½ hours.

Crock Pot method- same as above, but saute the onion and garlic in a skillet then put in crock pot with all other ingredients and simmer for at least 3 hours.

Serve piping hot and garnish with a dollop of sour cream.

# More Fun Acorn Squash Recipes!

## Acorn Squash Dip

2 acorn squash, mashed (use microwave method)  
1 cup cream (or milk)  
2 cups Swiss cheese, grated  
salt and pepper  
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
1 tablespoon Tabasco or other hot sauce (optional)

Mix all ingredients together and place in an 8x8 inch, buttered casserole dish. Bake at 375 degrees for ½ hour and serve with crusty bread, pita, or tortilla chips.

## Acorn Squash Pancakes

2 cups all purpose flour  
2 tbsp. sugar  
2 tsp. baking powder  
1/2 tsp. baking soda  
3/4 tsp. cinnamon  
1/8 tsp. nutmeg  
1/2 tsp. salt  
3/4 cup mashed acorn squash  
1 1/4 cups milk  
1/4 tsp. cider vinegar  
2 eggs  
1/2 tsp. vanilla  
Unsalted butter or cooking spray, for frying

Optional- add raisins, dried cranberries, chopped apple, or walnuts

In a medium bowl mix together flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt: set aside. In a large bowl, whisk together squash, milk, vinegar, butter, eggs and vanilla. Add dry mixture to wet and stir until just thick and combined (lumps are okay at this point).

Heat a pan or griddle over medium-low heat; melt a little butter on the bottom or coat lightly with cooking spray. Ladle approximately 1/4 cup batter into the pan for each pancake and cook until the undersides are brown and the tops are lightly speckled with bubbles. Flip pancakes and cook until undersides are browned.

Serve immediately topped with maple butter, or keep pancakes warm on a baking sheet in a 200-degree oven until you finish cooking the rest.

## Acorn Squash Soup with Bacon and Kale

4 strips bacon (4 ounces), cut into 1/2-inch pieces  
1 medium onion, finely chopped  
1/2 pound kale, thick stems removed, leaves finely chopped (about 8 cups)  
4 cups mashed acorn squash  
Coarse salt and ground pepper

Cook bacon in a large saucepan over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until crisp, 4 to 5 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer bacon to a paper-towel-lined plate; set aside. Add onion to fat in pan, and cook until softened, 4 to 5 minutes. Add kale; cook until soft, 3 to 4 minutes.

Add squash puree and 3 cups water (or more if necessary to achieve desired consistency); bring just to a boil. Season generously with salt and pepper. Serve, garnished with reserved bacon.

## Acorn Squash Gnocchi (Dumplings)

1/2 acorn squash mashed  
1 egg yolk  
1 1/4 to 1 1/2 cups plain flour  
2 oz .soft goat cheese or ricotta cheese  
Optional: 2 finely chopped sage leaves

Add all ingredients together and mix until combined, mashing the cheese and squash as necessary so you don't get lumps.

Lightly flour a work surface to roll out and rest gnocchi on until you are ready to cook. With floured hands, roll out large spoonfuls of the dough into logs and cut off sections about 1/2-3/4in/2cm thick. Roll each chunk into a ball and place onto a floured surface or a plate..

Bring a shallow, wide pan of water to the boil. Drop a few gnocchi into the boiling water at a time, being careful not to overcrowd the pan and keeping the water boiling.

Remove with a slotted spoon once the gnocchi rise to the top. If they don't rise after a couple minutes or some do but others don't, nudge them with a spoon as they may have stuck to the bottom.

Serve with browned butter, pesto or your choice of sauce and some parmesan on top.

Note - you can freeze uncooked gnocchi by laying out on a baking sheet, freezing then transferring to a freezer bag once frozen. Cook from frozen as you would normally, they'll just take an extra minute to float up.