

## Roasted Acorn Squash with Dirt Rice Pilaf

### Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1/2 medium onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 medium red bell pepper, diced
- 2 cups long grain white rice
- 1/2 pound pork sausage
- 1/2 pound ground beef
- 3/4 teaspoon salt + more to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon red cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
- 1/4 cup golden raisins
- 1/2 cup frozen peas, thawed
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 strip of orange zest (about 1"x2")
- pinch saffron steeped in 1/4 cup of hot water
- 2 acorn squash



### Prep Veggies

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Add butter and oil in a medium skillet. Melt butter over medium heat. Add onion, garlic and red bell pepper. Cook until onions are soft and translucent (about 7 minutes). Place rice in a fine mesh strainer and rinse thoroughly until water runs clear. Place rice in a 9"x13" casserole dish. Pour onion/butter mixture over the rice and stir to coat the rice completely. Set aside.

### Prep Proteins

Add sausage and ground beef to the skillet over medium heat. Brown the meat slightly, then add salt, pepper, cayenne and thyme. Brown completely, drain excess fat, and add meat to the casserole dish. Add peas and golden raisins to the casserole dish.

### Prep Rice Mixture

Place stock, bay leaves, orange zest and saffron tea in a medium sauce pan over high heat. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce heat to simmer for 5 minutes. Pour the stock mixture (including the bay leaves and zest) over the rice mixture and stir mix completely. Immediately cover tightly with aluminum foil. Place in the oven and bake for 35-40 minutes. Remove from the oven and place on the counter for at least 15 minutes before removing the foil.

### Prep Squash

Increase oven temperature to 425 degrees Fahrenheit. While it is heating, wash and cut acorn squash into 1" rings, removing the seeds. Place the rings on a parchment-lined baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil. Rub the oil all over each squash ring. Sprinkle salt and pepper over both sides of each ring. Roast for 30-35 minutes or until surface is golden brown and flesh is soft and tender.

### Combine Ingredients and Serve

To serve, place an acorn ring on a plate. Remove the foil from the pilaf and remove the bay leaves and zest. Fluff the pilaf with a fork, then fill each ring with pilaf.

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