

Zucchini and Squash Week

Zucchini, Black Beans and Rice Supper

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Zucchini, Black Bean and Rice Supper

Ingredients

- 1 Tablespoon Canola Oil
- 1-1/2 cups fresh Zucchini
- 15 ounces canned no-salt-added Black Beans
- 1 medium Tomato
- 1 cup Water
- 1 cup instant Brown Rice, uncooked
- ¼ cup shredded Cheddar and Monterey Jack Cheese Blend

Instructions

1. In a large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat.
2. Slice zucchini lengthwise and chop.
3. Add zucchini to skillet and sauté until tender, stirring often.
4. Drain and rinse black beans from the can, then add beans to the skillet.
5. Chop tomato and add to skillet along with water.
6. Increase heat and bring to a boil.
7. Add rice; stir well.
8. Remove from heat and let stand 7 minutes or until liquid is absorbed.
9. Sprinkle each portion with 1 tablespoon cheese blend, if desired.

Yield: 4 servings – 1 ½ cups each

Recipe Suggestions: May use wild rice in place of brown rice – if doing this just omit water and precook wild rice and stir in with tomatoes – let heat through and ready to serve.

Stuffed Zucchini Boats

Ingredients

- 2 medium Zucchini
- 4 slices Bread or 1 1/3 cup Breadcrumbs
- ¼ teaspoon ground Sage
- 1 teaspoon Onion Powder
- 1 teaspoon No Salt Seasoning (like Mrs.DASH or any combination of seasonings)
- 1 teaspoon Lemon Pepper
- 1 teaspoon Dill Weed

Instructions

1. Pre-heat oven to 375° F.
2. Cut zucchini in half lengthwise. Using a spoon, scoop out seeds, forming a trench in each zucchini half.
3. Place zucchini in a pot of boiling water, and boil for 3 to 5 minutes.
4. While zucchini is cooking, toast 2 slices of bread.
5. Place toast and 2 uncooked pieces of bread in food processor to make breadcrumbs.
6. Add seasonings to breadcrumbs and mix well.
7. Add ½ cup of the zucchini cooking water and blend with a fork to get the consistency of stuffing.
8. Remove zucchini from water and place in 8 x 8" baking dish, peel side down.
9. Spoon stuffing into trench in each zucchini half.
10. Bake for 20 minutes and serve.

Yield: 4 – ½ zucchini each.

Lasagna Stuffed Spaghetti Squash

Ingredients

- 1 small Spaghetti Squash
- ½ c. low-fat Cottage Cheese
- 2 Tbsp. Parmesan Cheese
- ⅓ c. Marinara Sauce
- ½ c. Mozzarella Cheese, divided
- ½ c. Spinach
- ½ c. Favorite Vegetables (peppers, broccoli, etc.)

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 425 F.
2. Using a large serrated knife, carefully cut spaghetti squash in half lengthwise. Use a spoon to scrape out and discard seeds.
3. Place squash halves cut side down on parchment lined baking sheet. Cook squash for 35-45 minutes or until tender.
4. Remove squash and place rack in middle of oven and heat to broil.
5. In a medium bowl, combine cottage cheese, parmesan, ¼ c. mozzarella, marinara and spinach.
6. Use fork to scrape and separate the squash strands. Divide filling mixture among the 2 squash halves. Top with your favorite vegetable and sprinkle with mozzarella. Broil until cheese is golden-brown. Approximately 2-3 minutes.

Yield: 4 servings – ½ squash each. Each serving is 150 calories and 20 grams Carbohydrate. (Nutritional values will change depending on what vegetables you use)

Grilled Summer Squash

Ingredients

- 4 medium Zucchini
- 4 medium Crookneck Squash
- ¼ teaspoon Garlic Powder
- ¼ teaspoon Black Pepper

Instructions

1. Wash squash with mild soap and water; rinse well.
2. Cut each squash into four pieces; cut both vertically and horizontally.
3. Place on a cookie sheet or large platter and spray with non-stick cooking spray.
4. Sprinkle with garlic powder and black pepper, to taste (both optional).
5. Cook on either a grill mark griddle pan or on a grill. If using a griddle grill, cook for approximately three to five minutes, flipping once. The squash should be tender but not mushy. If cooking on a gas grill, place flat surface down on a sheet of aluminum foil sprayed with non-stick cooking spray.
6. Cook approximately 5 to 7 minutes over a medium flame, watching carefully. Flip and cook approximately 2 more minutes on the “round” side.

Yield: 8 servings – 2 zucchini and 2 yellow squash each

Serving Suggestions: This would be great paired with your favorite chicken, steak or pork dish! This also makes a large serving – would be great to serve once and have leftovers and add to your favorite salad.

Chicken and Summer Squash Bow Tie Pasta

Ingredients

- 6 ounces Whole Wheat Bow-tie pasta, uncooked
- 3 tablespoons Unsalted Butter
- 8 ounces boneless, skinless Chicken Breasts
- 2 cups frozen Summer Squash
- 1 teaspoons Mrs. Dash Table Blend herb seasoning or any Low Salt Combination (See seasoning combinations at end of packet)
- 1/8 teaspoon Salt
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan Cheese

Instruction

1. Prepare bow-tie pasta per package instructions without adding salt. Drain.
2. Dice chicken. Melt 2 tablespoons butter in a skillet over medium heat. Add chicken and cook until chicken is no longer pink inside.
3. Add frozen squash to the skillet with chicken. Heat through.
4. Add Mrs. Dash® Table Blend seasoning and salt to chicken and squash.
5. Stir cooked pasta into chicken mixture. Add 1 tablespoon butter and stir until melted.
6. Divide into 4 portions and sprinkle each serving with 1/2 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese before serving.

Yield: 4 – 1 ¾ cup servings.

Chicken and Summer Vegetables Kebabs

Ingredients

- 1 Tablespoon Peach or Apricot Jam
- 2 Tablespoons Olive Oil
- 2 Tablespoons Lemon Juice
- 1 teaspoon Mrs. Dash® herb seasoning blend or other No Salt Seasoning
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1-pound boneless, skinless Chicken Thighs or Breasts
- 1 medium Zucchini
- 1 medium Yellow Summer Squash
- 1 Red Bell Pepper
- 1 medium Onion

Instructions

1. To make the marinade, measure the peach jam into a small microwave safe bowl and heat for 10 to 15 seconds to liquefy. Add the olive oil, lemon juice, Mrs. Dash herb seasoning and salt. Stir until well blended.
2. Rinse the chicken thighs and pat dry with a paper towel. Cut each thigh into 4 pieces and place in a zip-top bag.
3. Add 3 tablespoons marinade to the chicken pieces. (Reserve 2 tablespoons marinade to use on vegetables.) Seal the zip-top bag and refrigerate to marinate.
4. Cut the vegetables into even bite-sized pieces for the kebabs (zucchini-8 slices; yellow squash-8 slices; red pepper-16 pieces; onion-varies). Place them in a medium bowl and add reserved marinade. Stir to coat the vegetable pieces.
5. Thread the vegetables and chicken pieces onto skewers (4 large or 8 small skewers).
6. Heat the grill to medium heat. Place the skewers on the grill and cook covered for 12 to 15 minutes. Turn the skewers 2 or 3 times to cook evenly.

Yield: 4 – 1 Large Kebab or 2 Medium Kebabs

Zippy Zucchini

Ingredients

- 4 cups Zucchini
- 1/2 medium Onion
- 4 large Eggs
- 1/2 cup Shredded Cheddar Cheese
- 2-ounce jar Pimento or ¼ cup Bell Peppers
- 1/4 teaspoon Salt
- 1/8 teaspoon Black Pepper

Instructions

1. Cut zucchini into chunks. Thinly slice onion.
2. Place zucchini and onion in 10" x 6" x 2" dish. Cover with plastic wrap, turning one edge back slightly to vent. Microwave on high for 7 minutes. Drain liquid.
3. In large bowl, mix together beaten eggs, cheese, drained pimento, salt and pepper. Add zucchini and onions, stirring well.
4. Grease dish in which vegetables were microwaved.
5. Pour mixture into dish and cover with paper towel. Microwave on medium-high for 4 minutes. Remove paper towel and stir.
6. Continue to microwave uncovered for 4 to 6 minutes until center is set.

Yield: 8 – ½ cup servings. Each serving is 80 calories and 4 grams Carbohydrates.

Cooking Tip: Prepare this dish in the oven instead of microwave if desired. Bake at 350° F for 30 minutes or until set.

Serving Suggestion: The amount of cheese per portion is 1 tablespoon.

Greek Zoodle Salad

Ingredients

- 2 Zucchini
- 1/4 c. Red Onion, diced
- 1/4 English Cucumber, sliced
- 10 Cherry Tomatoes, halved
- 10 Kalamata olives, pitted & sliced
- 1/4 c. Greek Dressing
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Cut zucchini with spiralizer tool. A peeler may be used if necessary.
2. Place zoodles in a bowl. Add onion, cucumber, tomatoes and olives.
3. Pour dressing over salad and toss to combine. Season as needed.

Yield: 4 servings.

Homemade Greek Salad Dressing

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup Olive Oil
- 1/2 cup Apple Cider Vinegar
- 1 medium Lemon Juice (2 Tbsp)
- 1 1/2 tsp Garlic Powder
- 1 1/2 tsp dried Oregano
- 1 1/2 tsp dried Basil
- 1 tsp Honey Mustard
- 1 tsp Parsley
- 1 tsp Onion Powder
- 1 tsp Salt
- 1 tsp Pepper

Instructions:

1. Combine all ingredients into an air tight container or jar and whisk or shake until mixed together well.
2. Store in fridge for up to two weeks. Shake until combined for each use.

Summer Squash Salad

Ingredients

- ¼ c. Pine Nuts (or Slivered Almonds or Sunflower Seeds)
- 2 lb. Zucchini and Yellow Squash
- Salt to taste
- 1 c. Feta Cheese
- 3 Tbsp. Olive Oil

Instructions

1. Use a vegetable peeler to shave the squashes into paper-thin ribbons, starting on one side and making quarter turns until you reach the seedy core. Spread the ribbons on a cutting board and sprinkle with salt.
2. In a small skillet over medium-low heat, toast the nuts until they are turning golden and fragrant, stirring frequently.
3. Place squash in a serving bowl (if you are not serving the salad immediately, refrigerate the squash.)
4. Toss the squash with the feta, olive oil and nuts. Serve immediately.

Yield: 10 servings. Each serving is 110 calories and 4 grams Carbohydrate.

Zucchini Bread

Ingredients

- 3¼ c. All-purpose Flour
- 1½ tsp. Salt
- 1 tsp. ground Nutmeg
- 2 tsp. Baking Soda
- 1 tsp. ground Cinnamon
- 3 c. Sugar
- 1 c. Olive oil
- 4 Eggs, beaten
- 1/3 c. Water
- 2 c. grated Zucchini
- 1 tsp. Lemon Juice
- 1 c. chopped Pecans (optional)

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. In a large bowl, combine flour, salt, nutmeg, baking soda, cinnamon and sugar.
3. In a separate bowl, combine oil, eggs, water, zucchini and lemon juice.
4. Mix wet ingredients into dry and add nuts.
5. Bake in two standard loaf pans, sprayed with nonstick spray, for one hour.

Yield: 2 loaves – 12 slices each

Additional Seasoning Ideas...

To add more flavor or change the flavor to the above sheet pan meals you may use the following Low Salt Seasoning Recipes to make on your own seasonings. You can also find no salt seasoning blends such as Mrs. DASH – in a wide variety of flavors at a local grocery store – this sometimes can be cheaper instead of buying all the seasonings to make a blend that you may not use as often!

Italian Blend

2 tbsp Dried Oregano
1 ½ tbsp Dried Marjoram
1 ½ tbsp Dried Basil
1 tbsp Dried Thyme
1 tbsp Dried Rosemary
1 tbsp Dried Sage

Cajun Blend

2 ½ tbsp Sea Salt
1 tbsp Oregano
1 tbsp Paprika
1 tbsp Cayenne Pepper
1 tbsp Black Pepper
1 tsp Onion Powder
1 tsp Garlic Powder

Salt Free All Purpose Seasoning

2 tbsp Garlic Powder
2 tbsp Onion Powder
1 tbsp Chili Powder
1 tbsp Paprika
1 tbsp Parsley
1 ½ tsp Pepper

Poultry Seasoning

2 tbsp Thyme
1 tbsp Rosemary
1 tbsp Sage
1 tsp Marjoram
½ tsp Ground Pepper
½ tsp Celery Seed
½ tsp Nutmeg

Mix all seasonings together and store in air-tight container.

Looking to just spice up your plate – add a dash of each of these spices to get these flavor combinations...

1. **Italian Blend:** Basil + Oregano
2. **Savory Blend:** Rosemary + Sage
3. **Tex-Mex Blend:** Chili Powder+ Cumin+ Paprika + Oregano + Cayenne
4. **Asian Blend:** Ginger + Garlic + Red Pepper Flakes
5. **Indian Blend:** Curry + Cumin + red pepper flakes for heat or garlic powder for savory
6. **Sweet Blend:** Cinnamon + Nutmeg

Squash: A New Pasta Alternative

What are Zoodles?

Zoodles are zucchini made into faux-pasta. Or you can use yellow crookneck squash. Spaghetti squash is also used to make faux-pasta. Once you make these pasta substitutes you can dress them up the same way you normally dress up pasta!

Follow these simple steps to make a balanced zoodle or spaghetti squash meal.

Step 1: Choose Your Faux-pasta Squash

- Zoodles: Using a spiralizer (a kitchen tool used to transform veggies into pasta-like spirals), push the zucchini through to make pasta shaped cuts. Drizzle olive oil over the zoodles and cook in a frying pan for a few minutes until tender.
- Spaghetti squash: Cut a spaghetti squash in half. Scoop out the seeds. Lightly oil the inside of the squash and bake, face down on a baking sheet, for about 45 minutes at 400 F°. Remove the squash, let cool for 15 minutes, then use a fork to scrape out the insides and create your “spaghetti.”
Tip: Before cutting the squash you can microwave for 6 minutes, then cool. This makes it easier to cut the squash in half. For added safety, hold the squash with a kitchen towel when cutting.

Step 2: Pick Your Protein

Squash pasta alternatives are low in calories and carbohydrates so they may leave you feeling hungry. Add one of these suggested protein sources to add more calories, protein and nutrients.

- Chicken (cooked and diced)
- Ground turkey or beef meatballs
- Salmon
- Shrimp
- Veggie crumbles (soy replacement for ground meat)

Step 3: Pick Your Sauce

- Marinara Sauce – limit if you are limiting potassium foods – use in small portions or choose lower potassium sauces.
- Drizzle pasta with olive oil and season with garlic or onion powders (not garlic or onion SALTS).

- Alfredo Sauce
- Pesto Sauce
- Roasted Red Pepper Tomato Sauce
- Thai Sweet Chili Sauce

Step 4: Add More Vegetables

Vegetables contain fiber and important nutrients that are good for the body and leave you feeling full longer. Low potassium options are best. Remember to count the squash noodles, vegetable-based sauce and added vegetables as part of your daily allowance. Even though summer squash and spaghetti squash are low in potassium compared to winter squash, portion is still important. You may need to limit fruit and vegetables at other meals or snacks if including more than 2 vegetable servings.

- Broccoli
- Brussels Sprouts
- Kale or raw spinach
- Mushrooms
- Onion
- Red or green bell peppers

Experiment with different sauces and protein combinations. Here are some suggestions:

- Alfredo Sauce with shrimp and spaghetti squash
- Roasted Brussels sprouts with pesto sauce and zoodles
- Roasted Red Pepper Sauce with veggie crumbles and spaghetti squash
- Thai Sweet Chili Sauce with turkey meatballs and zoodles

Zucchini and it's Health Benefits

Zucchini, also known as courgette, is a summer squash in the *Cucurbitaceae* plant family, alongside melons, spaghetti squash, and cucumbers. It can grow to more than 3.2 feet (1 meter) in length but is usually harvested when still immature — typically measuring under 8 inches (20 cm). Although zucchini is often considered a vegetable, it is botanically classified as a fruit. It occurs in several varieties, which range in color from deep yellow to dark green. While squashes originated in the Americas, this particular variety was first developed in the early 1800s in Italy. Zucchini has been used in folk medicine to treat colds, aches, and various health conditions. However, not all of its uses are backed by science.

Here are 9 Health Reason to Consumer Zucchini

1. **Rich in Many Nutrients** – Zucchini contains a variety of vitamins, minerals, and beneficial plant compounds. Cooked zucchini is particularly high in vitamin A, though raw zucchini contains slightly less.
2. **High in Antioxidants** – Zucchini boasts several antioxidants that may provide various health benefits - your eyes, skin, and heart, as well as offer some protection against certain types of cancer, such as prostate cancer. The highest levels are found in the fruit's skin.
3. **Contributes to Healthy Digestion** – Zucchini is rich in water and fiber, two compounds which can promote healthy digestion by reducing your risk of constipation and symptoms of various gut disorders – include irritable bowel syndrome, Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.
4. **May Help to Lower Blood Sugar Levels** – At 3 grams of carbohydrates per cooked cup – zucchini provides a great low-carb alternative to pasta to those looking to reduce carbohydrate intake. Low-carb diet can significantly lower blood sugar and insulin levels, both of which may keep blood sugar levels stable and reduce the need for medication in people with type 2 diabetes. What's more, zucchini's fiber helps stabilize blood sugar, preventing levels from spiking after meals. Diets rich in fiber from fruits and vegetables – including zucchini – are consistently linked to lower the risk of type 2 diabetes.
5. **May Improve Heart Health** – The fiber, potassium, and carotenoids in zucchini may lower blood pressure, cholesterol, and other risk factors for heart disease.
6. **May Strengthen your Vision** – Zucchini is rich in manganese, lutein, zeaxanthin, and vitamin A and C – nutrients which contribute to healthy vision and may lower your risk of age-related eye conditions.

7. **May Aid Weight Loss** – Zucchini is rich in water and fiber yet low in calories, all of which may help reduce hunger and help you feel full – potentially leading to weight loss over time.
8. **Bone health** - Zucchini is rich in the antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin, as well as vitamin K and magnesium, all of which can help strengthen bones.
9. **A healthy prostate** - Animal research shows that zucchini seed extracts may help limit prostatic hyperplasia, an enlargement of the prostate that commonly causes urinary and sexual difficulties in older men.

Easy to Add to Your Diet – Zucchini is incredible versatile and can be eaten cooked or raw!

- Add it raw to salads.
- Stew it with other summer fruits and vegetables to make ratatouille.
- Stuff with rice, lentils, or other vegetables, then bake it.
- For a mild stir-fry, add olive oil and sauté it.
- Boil it, then blend it into soups.
- Serve it as a side, grilled or sautéed with a little garlic and oil.
- Try it breaded and baked/fried.
- Spiralize it into spaghetti- or linguine-like noodles or slice it to replace lasagna sheets.
- Bake it into breads, pancakes, muffins, or cakes.