

Oyster Mushroom Savory Pudding

(a.k.a. "stuffing")

Ingredients

1 loaf European style rustic bread, *about 1 pound*
3 tablespoons olive or hemp oil
Sea salt
Freshly ground black pepper
1 ounce dried porcini mushrooms
1 cup boiling water
1½ cups hot low sodium vegetable stock
½ cup Earth Balance Soy-Free spread
*or 1 stick Earth Balance Natural Shortening
plus some for greasing pan*
¼ cup sliced shallots
½ cup finely chopped celery
½ cup finely chopped onion
1 pound oyster mushrooms *cleaned, tough stems removed, roughly
chopped*
⅔ cup toasted and chopped hazlenuts
⅔ cup dried cranberries or dried cherries *soaked in hot water 15 mins and
drained.*
¼ cup finely chopped parsley
½ tbs finely chopped fresh thyme
½ tbs finely chopped fresh sage
¼ cup finely chopped rosemary

Directions

Preheat the oven to 375°

Oil a large, shallow baking dish *9"x13" pan is ideal*

Place the porcini in a small heatproof bowl and pour boiling water over them. Steep until soft *about 20 minutes*.

Rub the porcini to remove any grit, then remove them from the water.

Coarsely chop and set aside. Strain the soaking liquid through a cheesecloth lined sieve directly into your stock. Set aside.

To toast the bread, cut the crusts off the loaf then cut the bread into 1½" chunks to yield about 8 cups of bread cubes. In a bowl, toss the bread with oil and season with salt and pepper. Spread the bread on a baking sheet and toast until golden about 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove pan from the oven and set aside. Reduce oven temp to 350°.

Melt the spread in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add the chopped porcini, shallot, celery, onion and oyster mushrooms and sauté, stirring occasionally until all the vegetables are softened, about 10 minutes, seasoning to taste with salt and pepper. Remove from heat.

In a large bowl combine the toasted bread, oyster mushroom mixture, hazelnuts, cranberries/cherries, herbs and porcini liquid stock mixture. Stir well. Spread the mixture in the prepared pan. Cover pan with foil. Bake for 29 minutes, then remove the foil and another 35 minutes until the top is crusty and golden. Serve the savory pudding directly from the baking dish.

Makes 8 servings.