



Pesto Spinach Stuffed Spaghetti Squash

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“This dish turns roasted spaghetti squash into an edible bowl filled with a sumptuous, easy-to-make spinach-ricotta mixture that’s seasoned with basil pesto and topped with mozzarella cheese. A key here is using good quality prepared pesto— homemade if you have it on hand (I often make a big batch when basil is in peak season, and store it in the freezer in smaller portions) but store-bought certainly works too. When choosing pesto at the store, I suggest getting one from the refrigerator case which is much fresher tasting than the kind in jars on the shelf. As you dig into the dish, the squash naturally reveals the noodle-like texture that gives it its name, and each forkful includes a generous bite of the creamy, herb-y spinach filling and melted mozzarella. The recipe serves four for a light meal, but if you are especially hungry, go for a double portion like my husband usually does.” – Ellie Krieger

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Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

1 medium spaghetti squash (about 3 pounds)
2 teaspoons olive oil
One 16-ounce package frozen, chopped spinach, thawed
½ cup prepared basil pesto
½ cup part-skim ricotta cheese
1 clove garlic, finely minced
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
½ cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese (2 ounces)

Directions

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

Cut the squash in half lengthwise, scoop out the seeds and brush the cut sides with the oil (To make the squash easier to cut, put it, whole, in the microwave for one minute to soften it.) place cut side down on a sheet pan and cook until softened, about 40 minutes.

While the squash cooks, make the filling. Put the spinach into a fine mesh strainer and press out as much of the liquid as possible. (You can discard the liquid or save it to use in soups or smoothies.) Put the spinach in a medium bowl with the pesto, ricotta cheese, garlic, salt and pepper and mix to combine.

When the squash is ready, flip it over on the sheet pan so it sits cut-side up and fill both cavities with the spinach mixture. Sprinkle the mozzarella cheese on top of each and return to the oven until the cheese is melted and browned in spots, about 20 minutes more.

Allow to rest for 5 minutes, then cut each half lengthwise and serve.



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