



# RECIPE for health

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featured food:  
**PUMPKIN**

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Piles of pumpkins are everywhere this time of year. How do you know which one to choose? Like so many things in life, it depends. Do you plan to make a jack-o-lantern or a dish-for-dinner? Jack-o-lantern criteria are determined by the whim of the carver. For cooking and baking, choose one of the small pumpkins, often referred to as sugar pumpkins. They are firmer, meatier and less stringy than the larger varieties. As with other winter squashes, pumpkins should be firm and heavy for their size. Store your uncut pumpkin in a cool, dry, well-ventilated place until you're ready to prepare it.

The edible parts of the pumpkin are inside the hard outer rind. Start by splitting the pumpkin in half and cutting away the stem. Scrape out the seeds and strings and set aside. Place the pumpkin on an oiled baking sheet and cover tightly with foil. Bake at 425°F for one and a half hours. It's done when the flesh is extremely soft. Let set at room temperature until cool enough to handle. Then scrape the flesh out of the rind and place in a cheesecloth-lined colander to drain for an hour. Now the pumpkin is ready to mash or puree.

Whether you're carving or cooking it, saving the seeds for roasting is a good idea.

- Place reserved seeds and strings in a colander and rinse under water until the seeds separate out.
- Move the seeds to a medium-size pot. For each cup of seeds, add 4 cups water and 2 tablespoons salt. Bring to a boil; simmer for 10 minutes. Drain well.
- Preheat oven to 400°F. Coat a sheet pan with olive oil. Add the seeds and toss to coat with oil then spread the seeds in a single layer. Place pan in hot oven. Check every few minutes; remove pan from the oven when seeds are brown around the edges.

Here's the hard part—let cool completely before eating.

## Stuffed Pumpkin

*Recipe developed by Corporate Chef Kurt Kwiatkowski and featured in Residential Dining Services. Serves 2-3 as main dish or 4-6 as side dish.*

- 1 (2 ¼ pound) pie pumpkin
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- ¼ cup diced carrots
- ¼ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup diced shallots
- ½ jalapeño pepper, diced (reserve seeds and veins)
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 Tablespoons white wine
- ¼ cup vegetable stock
- 1/3 cup diced grape tomatoes
- ¼ cup roasted walnuts
- 1 Tablespoon honey
- 1¼ cup cooked brown rice
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- ½ cup canned black beans, rinsed
- 2 Tablespoons chopped cilantro
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 425°F. Chisel-cut the cap off the pumpkin. Scoop out the strings and seeds. Replace the cap. Place the pumpkin on a sheet tray, then into hot oven. Bake for 25 minutes or until the pumpkin starts to soften.

While the pumpkin is cooking, warm olive oil in a sauté pan over medium heat; add carrots, celery and shallots and sauté for 5-7 minutes. Add jalapeño pepper and garlic; sauté for another minute. Deglaze the pan with white wine. Move the contents of sauté pan to medium bowl. Add remaining ingredients to the bowl. Mix well. Adjust heat to your preference by adding minced seeds and veins from jalapeño pepper. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Scrape contents of bowl into the pumpkin and return to oven for additional 20 to 30 minutes. To serve, scoop the stuffing and cooked pumpkin.

Try **Stuffed Pumpkin** for lunch at The Gallery at Snyder/Phillips, Brody Square and Riverwalk Market at Owen on October 9.