

APPLE, CORNBREAD AND SAUSAGE STUFFING

INGREDIENTS

- 2 sticks unsalted butter
- 2-½ cups chopped yellow onions
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 apples (like Jonathan, Fuji, Gravenstein or Granny Smith), cored and chopped into ½ inch dice
- 1 lb. sweet fennel sausage, casings removed and crumbled
- 4-½ cups cornbread, cut into ½-inch cubes
- 4-½ cups whole wheat or white bread, cut into ½-inch cubes
- 2 tsp. fresh sage, finely minced
- 2 tsp. dried thyme
- 1 tbsp. kosher salt
- ½ cup Italian parsley, minced
- 1-½ cups pecans, chopped

PREPARATION

Prep time: : 1 hour

Cook time: 30 minutes to cook if using a gratin pan

Serves: 14 (Can fill a 20 pound turkey)

Sauté onions and apples: Melt the butter in a large sauté pan. Add the chopped onions and garlic and cook over medium heat, partially covered, until tender and lightly colored, about 15 minutes. Add the apples and cook for another 10 minutes, until the apples are starting to color but are not mushy. Transfer onions, butter and apples to a large mixing bowl.

Cook sausage: Crumble the sausage into the same large sauté pan and cook over medium heat, stirring, until lightly browned. With a slotted spoon, transfer the sausage to the onion mixture and reserve the rendered fat.

Combine ingredients: Add the remaining ingredients (breads, sage, thyme, salt, parsley and pecans) to the mixing bowl and combine gently. Cool completely before stuffing the bird; refrigerate if not using promptly.

Stuff turkey or bake: Fill the turkey with the stuffing (there is enough to fill a 20 pound turkey) and put any remaining stuffing into a small buttered casserole pan. If using a casserole, bake at 300°F for 30 minutes, basting with either turkey juices, stock or the reserved sausage fat if it looks dry.

Serve warm.

For kids:

- Leave out the sage, thyme and parsley and substitute apple chicken sausage or breakfast sausage for a dish more pleasing to younger palates.

For leftovers:

- Use leftover stuffing to make a hearty, comforting cold-weather sandwich or wrap.

Simple substitutions:

- Change up the flavor by using walnuts or almonds in place of pecans.

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