



October 2001 – Pumpkins

With autumn in the air I think of Thanksgiving, Halloween, Harvest, Rich autumn colours and of course pumpkins. Pumpkins have been apart of the Thanksgiving celebration as far back as the 1600's, served as the celebrated pumpkin pie.

The pumpkin is a large vegetable fruit typically orange in colour, round and ribbed. Pumpkins are used all over the world for both savoury and sweet dishes. In Argentina they use the hollowed out pumpkin as a bowl to cook a meat stew in and use the flesh of the pumpkin as thickener for the stew. In France the pumpkin is used for making soups. In the Rhone-Alpes there is local pumpkin flavoured bread. In the old days pumpkin used to be a cheap wheat extender, so this bread was created, it is eaten similar to a brioche. In America the pumpkin pie was invented, possibly derived from an old English sweet pie made from boiled fruit. In Cyprus pasties are stuffed with pumpkin and crushed wheat and are popular for a quick hot breakfast on a cold winters day. Often mixed with cloves, cinnamon and sultana's. In Mexico the pumpkin seeds are roasted, fried or salted and are a popular snack.

Pumpkin Pie

1/2 recipe Pie crust-Roll out and line a 9" pie tin, trim and crimp the edges.

-Egg wash the crimped edges and place the pie crust in the fridge.

3 eggs

1/3c sugar

1/3c brown sugar

-beat together until light.

2c Pumpkin puree- cut a pumpkin in half and remove the seeds and loose pulp, place on a greased baking sheet. Bake @ 350* till soft, about 30 mins, cool. Scrape out the flesh and purée.

Or you can use canned pumpkin.

-Stir in to the sugar and egg mix.

1t ginger

1 1/2t cinnamon

1/2t cloves

1/2t allspice

1/4t cardamom

pinch of salt

-mix thoroughly

3/4c heavy cream

3/4c light cream

-stir in.

-pour into pie crust, bake @ 450* for 8 mins then reduce to 325* for 40-45 mins, until the filling is set.

Pecan halves-garnish

-arrange around the edge of the filling, lightly pressing into the warm filling. Cool before cutting.

South-western style soup

3 cups chicken stock or canned low-salt chicken broth

1 cup whipping cream

-mix and bring to a boil in a heavy pot.

2c pureed fresh pumpkin (method discussed in previous recipe)

or 15-ounce can pure pumpkin

3 tablespoons (packed) dark brown sugar

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1/2 teaspoon chili powder

1/2teaspoon ground coriander

1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg

-whisk in, reduce heat and allow to simmer until soup thickens slightly and flavours blend.

salt and pepper-season.

3/4 cup (packed) grated sharp cheddar cheese

Chopped fresh cilantro

-Pour soup in to bowls and garnish with the cheese and cilantro.

Spiced pumpkin bread

3 cups sugar

1 cup vegetable oil

-beat together

3 large eggs

2c Roasted and pureed pumpkin(method discussed in previous recipe)

Or 1 16-ounce can solid pack pumpkin

Mix in to sugar blend.

3 cups all purpose flour

1 teaspoon ground cloves

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1 teaspoon baking soda

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon baking powder

-sift all dry ingredients together, then stir them in to the wet ingreds.

1 cup coarsely chopped walnuts (optional)

-mix in, or try fresh cranberries, dates or other nuts.

-divide batter into 2 prepare loaf pans(buttered and floured) Bake about 1 hour and 10 mins @ 350*. Til tester comes out clean. Cool on racks for about 10mins, then turn out and cool completely.

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