



## A Place on Earth CSA Notes 092320

### In your share this week:

Sweet Potatoes; Pumpkin; Yellow Wax Beans; Radishes; Potatoes; Carrots; Eggplant; Garlic; Onions; Tomatoes; Cherry Tomatoes; Kale; Basil; Cilantro

### Welcome back, Sweet Potatoes—one of Nature's near-perfect foods!

Sorry some of you missed the CSA picnic, which was delightful, with kids running free under the watchful eyes of parents, and adults social distancing near the barn while we feasted on the riches of our collective bounty and skill. Rocio Velarde brought a marvelous Peruvian dish of mashed potatoes filled with meat, onions, and spices, and fried and shaped like potatoes. Papa rellena is delicious comfort food, similar to mashed potato pancakes, but with a surprise ground beef center. This is an excellent recipe for using up leftover mashed potatoes. First, you prepare a seasoned ground beef filling, similar to an empanada filling. Then you mold mashed potatoes around the savory ground beef, forming the whole thing into an oblong shape; basically, you make it look like a potato! The croquette is deep fried until it's golden brown and crispy. If you want to see the complete directions, she provided the website: <https://www.thespruceeats.com/papa-rellena-stuffed-potatoes-3028906>. The dish sounds difficult, but it's much easier to make than it sounds if you start with leftover mashed potatoes. I can hardly wait to try it!

Kids especially love this meal, especially with ketchup on the side.

### Peruvian Stuffed Potatoes

- 2 eggs
- 3 pounds yellow potatoes (or about 6 medium potatoes)
- 1/2 cup onion (finely chopped)
- 2 cloves garlic (minced)
- 1 tablespoon aji pepper (minced; or aji pepper paste, or minced jalapeño to taste)
- Vegetable oil (for cooking)
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 3/4 pound ground beef
- 3/4 cup beef broth
- 1/3 cup raisins
- Optional: 1/3 cup green olives (chopped)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt (or to taste)
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper (or to taste)

- 1/2 cup flour (for dusting; or more as needed)

Gather the ingredients. Cook one of the eggs in boiling water until hard-boiled and set aside. Reserve the other egg. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the unpeeled potatoes until they are tender when pierced with a fork.

While the potatoes are cooking, cook the onions, garlic, and aji pepper in the vegetable oil until soft and fragrant. Add the cumin and paprika to the onions and cook 2 minutes more, stirring. Add the ground beef and cook until browned. Add the beef broth and the raisins and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes more, or until most of the liquid is gone. Stir in the green olives, if using. Season mixture with salt and pepper to taste. Remove from heat and let cool.

When the potatoes are cooked, drain them in a colander. When they are cool enough to handle, peel them, and then mash the potatoes thoroughly (or pass them through a potato ricer). Season the mashed potatoes with salt and pepper to taste. Chill the potatoes uncovered for several hours, or overnight. Once the potatoes are very cold, stir the reserved egg into the mashed potatoes until well mixed.

Peel the hard-boiled egg and chop into about six pieces. With floured hands, place about 1/4 cup of mashed potatoes in one hand and make a well in the center. Fill the well with 1 to 2 tablespoons of the beef mixture and a piece of hard-boiled egg. Mold the potatoes around the beef, adding more potatoes if necessary to fully enclose the filling, and shape the whole thing into an oblong potato shape, with slightly pointy ends, about the size of a medium potato.

Repeat with the rest of the mashed potatoes. Coat each stuffed "potato" generously with flour. In a deep skillet or deep-fat fryer, heat 2 inches of oil to 360 F. Fry the potatoes in batches until they are golden brown. Drain them on a plate lined with paper towels. Keep the potatoes warm in a 200 F oven until ready to serve.

**Welcome back, Sweet Potatoes—one of Nature's near-perfect foods!** I am always excited to have sweet potatoes in my pantry, since they are a nutritional powerhouse, and so versatile. I love one of the ways Barbara Berman serves them: Roast the potatoes in their jackets, and when slightly cooled, slice them horizontally into 1/2" to 3/4" slices. Mix a small amount of mayonnaise—she uses the vegan variety—with a little Dijon mustard (try 1 tablespoon to 1/2 cup mayo, or adjust proportions, to your liking.) Put a small dollop in the center of each sweet potato. Serve as an appetizer or vegetable.

One of my favorite ways to use sweet potatoes—or pumpkins or winter squash) is in a chocolate pie. No kidding! I found this recipe in the Nutrition Action Health Letter, and if you look at the ingredients, you will see why. *I have made this at least a dozen times over the past 9 months.* It combines a can of pumpkin (not the pie filling)—or similar quantity of cooked sweet potatoes or winter squash—with a little sugar, cocoa powder, chocolate chips, and vanilla to form a rich, delicious pie filling, which can be added to a graham cracker crust. Not only that, it takes about 5 minutes to make if you have a pie crust ready, and chills for a few hours. The only thing you have to do other than stir, is to melt the chocolate chips in the microwave during 30-second

intervals until the chips are melted before adding to the batter. Here are the directions, so use any vegetable you want in the filling. I like all of them, but especially sweet potatoes.

### **Chocolate Pumpkin/Sweet Potato Pie**

1 cup dark chocolate chips  
1 3/4 cup (1 can) pumpkin (***not*** pumpkin pie mix), or sweet potatoes, or winter squash  
1/4-1/2 cup sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
2 teaspoons cocoa powder  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/3 cup chopped pecans, optional

Prepared pie crust, such as a ready-to eat graham cracker crust or make your own!

Melt chocolate in a bowl in the microwave, heating for 30 seconds at a time and stirring, repeating until just melted.

Place pumpkin/squash/sweet potatoes, sugar, cocoa powder, vanilla, and salt in a mixing bowl, and whisk vigorously until well mixed. Add melted chocolate and puree until very smooth. (Use a food processor if you wish.) Fold in chopped pecans, if using.

Pour pumpkin/sweet potato mixture into pie crust and use a spatula to smooth it out. Refrigerate until firm, at least 4-6 hours. This pie seems to taste more like a chocolate cream pie and has less pumpkin flavor after being refrigerated overnight, which you may consider a good thing! Serve chilled. Top with vanilla yogurt or ice cream if desired.

**Winter Squash**—another treasure! Winter squash is almost as nutritious as sweet potatoes, but not as sweet. My friend Carolyn Morgan sent this recipe for Butternut squash, but it could be used with pumpkins and other winter squash. I tried it tonight and am very impressed. The lime- peel and juice, paired with the cumin and sumac\* made an amazing flavor combination that I liked a lot. I think you are going to like this as well! I peeled the butternut with a potato peeler before cutting in half & removing seeds. It was an easy, rewarding dish, and not overly sweet.

### **Spiced Squash**

There is no oil in this recipe. The squash is so soft and satisfying that nothing more is required for richness.

- 1 pound peeled and cubed Gold Nugget squash (or butternut, or pumpkin)
- 1 cup water
- 2 ounces brown sugar
- 1 fresh lime leaf (or 1 dried Persian lime, or a piece of lime zest 2 inches long)
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- Large pinch ground cumin (less than 1/4 teaspoon)

- 1/4 teaspoon ground sumac
- Salt & pepper

In a saucepan that can accommodate the squash in a single layer, bring the squash, sugar, and water to a boil, with the lime leaf/peel. Lower the heat and continue cooking very sedately for from 20 to 30 minutes, or until the water has almost evaporated. Shake the pan gently every now and then to prevent the squash from sticking to the bottom.

When the liquid starts to turn syrupy, add the lime juice, the large pinch of cumin, and the sumac. Shake the pan gently again and tilt to spoon the juices over the squash pieces. Season with salt and pepper, and taste. Cook some more until all the liquid disappears, taking care not to scorch. ‘

Transfer the squash to a serving dish (use a spatula, so the squash is not...squashed– it is very soft). Eat at once. *Serves 2.*

\*If you don't have the spice, sumac, you can get it at Penzy's or al Watan on Klondike Lane. Lemon pepper or Za'atar are reasonable substitutes.

Do you have a recipe you think others would like to try? Please send them to me and I'll share with others.

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