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RICE PILAF

Baked in a Pumpkin

Judith Beto, PhD, RDN



This is a great way to wow your family or guests. When you bring this photo-worthy dish to a holiday gathering, no one will guess that it's also kidney-friendly. You can also just make the pilaf and serve it in a casserole dish. The cranberries add holiday color and are low in potassium too!

Serves 8 (Serving size approximately 2/3 cup each)

Ingredients

- 1 raw pumpkin – about 3-5 lbs.
- 3 cups cooked rice (prepared without salt)
- 2 small onions, diced
- 2 stalks celery, diced (or customize with peppers, zucchini, okra, or other vegetables)
- 2 carrots, peeled and diced
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 tbsp canola oil
- 1 cup dried or fresh cranberries

Fresh herbs of your choice (parsley, cilantro, basil) or dried herbs, black pepper

Instructions

You can prepare both the pumpkin shell and the rice pilaf ahead of time and store separately in the refrigerator until it's time to put it in the oven.

Pumpkin Shell Preparation

1. To prepare the pumpkin shell, carefully cut off the top of pumpkin. Make sure it will fit snugly when placed back on the pumpkin. Set aside.
2. Clean out inside of pumpkin to create an empty shell. Discard the

seeds and inside material.

3. Put whole pumpkin on a foil lined cookie sheet or baking pan. (If making ahead, store the pumpkin shell in the refrigerator.)

Filling Preparation

1. NOTE: If you have a large pumpkin, you may need to double the ingredients for the rice pilaf.
2. To make the pilaf filling, prepare the rice if not already made. Set aside.
3. Sauté all of the vegetables (onion, celery, carrots, garlic) in the canola oil in a saucepan until they are soft.
4. Stir in the rice, seasonings, and cranberries.

To Bake

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Gently spoon rice pilaf into the empty pumpkin shell and replace top of pumpkin to cover. If you are not using a pumpkin, place in casserole dish.
3. Bake for about 60 minutes, or until the pumpkin shell pierces easily with a fork or knife. If using a casserole dish, cover and bake for only 30 minutes, or until heated through.
4. Let cool for at least 15 minutes.

5. Serve warm or at room temperature by scooping servings out of the pumpkin shell with a large serving spoon.
6. For more fun, slice through the pumpkin to create 8 to 12 wedges. Serve a wedge alongside the pilaf. The pumpkin will be soft, but firm. Eat only the flesh of the pumpkin and discard the tough skin.

Nutrient Analysis per serving

(Rice Pilaf = 2/3 cup filling and 1/8 pumpkin shell flesh)

Calories 460

Protein	5 g
Fat	15 g
Carbohydrate	80 g
Sodium	40 m
Potassium	426 mg
(110 just pumpkin)	

Calcium	75 mg
Phosphorus	110 mg
Cholesterol	0 mg

See Recipe disclaimer on page 31

Judith (Judy) Beto, PhD, RDN, was the first editor of the *Journal of Renal Nutrition*. She is a research consultant for the Div. of Nephrology and Hypertension at the Loyola University Healthcare System and an Associate Research Editor for the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*.

