

# Stuff Your Faces

Four super stuffing recipes

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Sausage Lovers Stuffing

**T**he time for annual feasting is nigh. Belts will loosen and contented sighs will be uttered before we all slip into our welcome food comas. It is a time of carousal, a time of celebration and a time of song. The 12 days of Christmas springs readily to mind, which in my family, I begin hearing around the start of October. However motivated by purely gastronomic interests, I don't mark this song by the leaping lords or dancing ladies—what concerns me most are the numerous fowl options the song joyously trills through. My mouth begins to water because as I sing about partridges, doves, and hens. All I can think about is eating them—yes, eating them all!

My challenge to you all as you plan your annual feasts is to join me in a quest to eat my way through these 12 days (whenever they fall in your holiday roster) with the gusto we chileheads pride ourselves on. Smoke that partridge with sprigs from a pear tree and serve it with warm compote. Make the perfect romantic meal for two with braised turtledoves. Roast those French hens with a dry rub of fresh herbs and spices. Quiet your house by stewing whatever calling birds you may find. And by Jove—eat those geese and their eggs too! Why not make a tagine? The possibilities are as limitless as a holiday appetite.

Everyone has an old family stuffing recipe that goes back to one's great grandmother's mother. The basics are mostly the same: stale bread that miraculously transforms once again into something appetizing and even mouth watering, stock (most often chicken), onions, celery, and butter. It is a good beginning to a great thing. Since stuffing is the penultimate comfort food you won't find peppers to blow the roof off your mouth in these recipes. What you will find is a rich chile-infused flavor and a variety of suggestions for mixing things up a bit at the table by taking something as simple as stale bread and making it divine.

Photography by Bill Brady

## Sausage Lovers Stuffing

Yield: 6 to 8 hefty portions • Zest Factor: Mild

*Bird suggestion: This stuffing can hold its own against darker meat-try duck. This stuffing smells like the best sausage pizza, tastes of comfort and bliss and is so darn good you'll find yourself sneaking to the fridge in the dead of night just for another spoonful. It's got the power of meat!*

- 3 tablespoons butter, divided
- 1 cup finely diced onions
- ½ cup finely diced celery
- 2 teaspoons fresh rosemary, minced
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme, minced
- 2 garlic cloves, pressed
- 1 cup sliced lamb sausage
- 1 cup sliced chorizo
- 1 cup andouille sausage
- 1 (4.5 ounce) can chopped green chiles
- 1 teaspoon poultry seasoning
- 1 egg
- salt and freshly ground pepper
- 5 cups rosemary ciabatta bread, cubed and toasted
- 1 ½ cups chicken stock

Preheat oven to 350°. In a large pan over medium high heat, add 1 tablespoon of butter, the onion, and the celery. Sauté mixture for 6-8 minutes, then add minced rosemary, thyme, and garlic and cook for another 2 minutes. Transfer this mixture to a large bowl. Next brown your sausage in the same large pan for 3-4 minutes until fully browned on all sides, work in batches if necessary, until all of the sausage is browned.



Fall Feaster's Stuffing

Add the browned sausage to the onion mixture and top with chiles, poultry seasoning, and egg. Season with salt and pepper and add the breadcrumbs and then the chicken stock. Mix until moist and well combined and then spoon it into an 8 by 8 inch casserole dish and bake, covered with aluminum foil for 45 minutes. Remove foil and finish baking for 15 minutes. Serve warm.

## Fall Feaster's Stuffing

Yield: 6 to 8 servings • Zest Factor: Mild

*Bird suggestion: traditional oven baked turkey. This may just be the triple crown with cornbread, challah, and cranberries (not to mention the sweet potato!). This stuffing highlights fall's finest colors, the yum factor is high and the sweetness is just right for the holidays.*

- 1 ½ cups diced sweet potato
- olive oil
- salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 ½ cups jalapeño cornbread, cubed
- 1 ½ cups challah or brioche bread, cubed
- 4 tablespoons butter, divided
- 1 cup finely diced onion
- ½ cup finely diced celery
- 1 ½ cups chicken stock
- 3 dried chipotle morita chiles
- ½ cup chopped pecans
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- ½ teaspoon poultry seasoning
- ½ teaspoon pumpkin spice seasoning
- 1 egg

Preheat your oven to 350°. On a small baking sheet, add the diced sweet potato and coat with olive oil then season with salt and pepper. Bake sweet potato for 20-25 minutes until fork tender. On another cookie sheet, toast the cornbread and challah cubes for 4 to 6 minutes until they are firm to the touch.

In a large sauté pan over medium high heat, add 1 tablespoon of butter and then add in the onion and celery. Sauté this mixture for 6 to 8 minutes, then transfer it to a large bowl. Meanwhile, add chicken stock and morita chiles to your sauté pan. Boil mixture then cook for 5 minutes. Let mixture cool for 10 minutes. Discard chiles.





Stuffing Gone Wild!

In the large bowl, add the remaining ingredients and stir well, then add in the toasted bread and sweet potato. Top with chicken stock and mix until moist and well combined. Fill a large casserole dish with stuffing (4 inch by 8 inch oval works) and bake for 45 minutes. Serve warm.

### Stuffing Gone Wild!

*Yield: 4 servings • Zest Factor: Mild*

*Bird suggestion: game birds pair perfectly with the rich tastes of this wild stuffing. Try quail, Cornish game hens, or even a small chicken. The woodiness of this recipe lends itself perfectly to small game birds. However, the richness of the buttery, browned mushrooms makes this course good enough to eat alone.*

- 5 tablespoons of butter, divided
- ¼ cup sliced baby portabella mushrooms
- ¼ cup sliced shitake mushrooms
- ¼ cup oyster mushrooms
- ¼ cup white button mushrooms
- salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 cup finely diced onion
- ½ cup finely diced celery
- 1 teaspoon sage
- 3 dried guajillo peppers
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 1 cup wild rice
- 3 tablespoons grated Romano cheese
- 2 tablespoons minced parsley

In a large sauté pan over medium-high heat, add 1 tablespoon of butter and sauté portabella mushrooms until browned on all sides (about 3 to 4 minutes, stirring

frequently). Season with salt and pepper and remove to a large plate. Add another tablespoon of butter and sauté the shitake mushrooms till browned (about 3 to 4 minutes). Season the mushrooms with salt and pepper and remove to a large plate. Repeat with oyster mushrooms and white button mushrooms and remove all mushrooms to a large plate for later use.

In the same large pan, add remaining butter and diced onions and celery. Sauté mixture for 6 to 8 minutes until celery softens and onions turn translucent then season with sage and additional salt and pepper. Next, add in guajillo peppers, chicken stock, and rice and bring to a boil. Once stock mixture has boiled, reduce heat to a simmer and cover pan and simmer for 50 minutes. After 50 minutes, remove pan from heat, remove peppers and stir mushrooms back into the rice. Cover for an additional 10 minutes. Uncover the pan, stir in Romano cheese, season to taste with salt and pepper and top with minced parsley.

### Jambalaya Stuffing

*Yield: 6 to 8 portions \* Zest Factor: Medium*

*Bird suggestion: smoked or deep fried turkey—spice things up. Here is the ultimate Cajun stuffing perfect to pair with your deep fried turkey. Complex flavors meld to create an even heat, nice acidity and burst of flavor.*

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup finely diced onion
- 1 cup finely diced celery
- 1 cup finely diced green bell pepper
- 1 tablespoon filé powder
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes
- ¼ cup tomato sauce
- 1 cup frozen cut okra
- 1 tablespoon minced jalapenos
- salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 cup sliced andouille sausage
- 1 cup diced chicken thighs
- ½ teaspoon hot smoked paprika
- ½ teaspoon cayenne
- 1 cup chopped shrimp
- 2 cups long grain white rice
- 4 cups shrimp stock (optional: substitute chicken stock)

- 2 bay leaves
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 4 tablespoons Tabasco based hot sauce

In a large sauté pan with at least 2-inch deep sides add 1 tablespoon olive oil and bring pan to medium-high heat. Add celery and onion and sauté for 4 minutes. Next, add in green peppers and cook another 2-3 minutes. Then stir in chopped tomatoes, tomato sauce, okra and jalapenos and cook another minute. Season with gumbo filé,

salt and pepper. Remove onion mixture from the pan into a large bowl.

Add the andouille to the pan and cook until browned (3 to 4 minutes). Remove from pan into the large bowl with the onions. Add another tablespoon of olive oil to the pan and add in the chicken thighs. Season chicken with paprika, cayenne, salt and pepper and cook for 2 to 3 minutes until just browned. Transfer the chicken to the bowl with the onion mixture and add remaining olive oil to the

pan. Add the shrimp and sauté until just pink (about 2 minutes) then remove to a separate small bowl.

Next add rice, stock, bay leaves, and garlic to the pan. Bring mixture to a boil and then reduce to a simmer. Return onion mixture and all contents of large bowl to the rice. Stir to combine and then cover for 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, remove bay leaves and return shrimp to mixture along with 4 tablespoons of hot sauce. Stir to mix all ingredients and serve warm.



Jambalaya Stuffing