

Vegetable Strata

Ingredients:

2 slices white bread, cubed;

¼ cup shredded reduced-fat Swiss cheese (or choose a cheese you prefer; or a combination of cheeses);

½ cup sliced carrots;

½ cup sliced mushrooms;

¼ c. chopped onion (increase to 1/3 cup if you prefer);

1 clove garlic, crushed;

1 teaspoon margarin or butter (I've used more);

½ c. chopped tomato (I've used canned – w/o the juice);

½ cup canned corn;

1 cup eggbeaters;

¾ skim milk.

The cookbook that contained this recipe focused on low fat and low cholesterol, so, if you wanted to increase the fat content (i.e., using butter instead), I doubt it will negatively influence the taste!

Directions:

Place bread cubes evenly into bottom of greased 1 ½ quart casserole dish. Sprinkle with cheese; set aside.

In medium, non-stick skillet, over medium heat, saute carrots, mushrooms, onion and garlic in margarine until tender. Stir in tomato and snow peas; cook 1 to 2 minutes more. Spoon over cheese. In small bowl, combine Egg Beaters and milk; pour over vegetable mixture. **Bake at 375 degrees for 45-50 minutes or until knife inserted in center comes out clean. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.**

Corn: An A-maize-ing Plant

Fun Folklore:

Maize, known as corn was domesticated in Mexico at least seven thousand years ago. Corn began as a staple in early American cultures, it then spread to the rest of the world via the Spanish explorers in the late 15th century. Among Native American tribes, corn was a symbol in rituals, folkloric medicine, and mythologies; the Cherokees believed it treated kidney stones, the Mohegan tribes used it to relieve poison ivy, and the Navajos relied on it for sore throats. In traditional Chinese medicine, corn was used to treat heart disease, gallstones, jaundice, and hepatitis.

Healthful Benefits:

Studies suggest corn offers heart health benefits, including improving blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Corn also has been found to have an anti-inflammatory effect in the body. A study published in the Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology found a component of corn to decrease the inflammatory response associated with colitis. Corn's ability to help protect against cancer is currently under investigation, however early studies suggest it may help reduce the risk of developing lung and colon cancers.

Delectable Dish:

Fresh corn harvests peaks during summer months. Select ears that boast green leaves and plump kernels firmly held in orderly rows; avoid those with shriveled husks with dark spots or brownish-colored tassels. Store corn in its husk, uncovered, in the refrigerator and consume within a few days of purchase. Steam, broil, microwave, or roast fresh ears. Use frozen or canned corn year around as alternatives for fresh. Corn is delicious added to soups, salads, and dips such as salsa. Cornmeal, a whole grain made from corn, is delicious in baked goods or enjoyed as grits or polenta.