

STUFFED SQUASH *Courtesy of Elin England, "Eating Close to Home"*

¼ cup pine nuts, or chopped hazelnuts or walnuts

3 to 4 squash, such as delicata or acorn

2 teaspoons olive oil

1 onion, chopped

4 cloves garlic, minced

1 carrot, finely chopped

1 parsnip, finely chopped

1 teaspoon minced rosemary

1 teaspoon minced thyme

Freshly ground pepper to taste

1 cup uncooked brown rice

½ teaspoon salt

2¼ cups vegetable or chicken stock, or water

½ cup minced parsley

1 large egg, beaten

3 teaspoons fine bread crumbs

Toast the nuts in a toaster oven at 300°F, or in a small cast-iron pan, until fragrant. This doesn't take long, so watch them carefully!

Halve the squash lengthwise and scoop out the seeds. Place the squash, cut side down, on a lightly greased pan. Bake at 350°F, until tender and easily pierced by a fork—about 45 minutes.

While the squash are cooking, heat the oil over medium heat in a skillet with a tight-fitting lid. Add the onion and sauté a few minutes until translucent. Add the garlic, carrot and parsnip. Sauté a few more minutes, then add the herbs, pepper and rice. Sauté another few minutes, stirring often, until the rice is lightly toasted.

Add the salt and stock or water. Stir the mixture, bring it to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and cover. Cook 40 minutes, until all the moisture is absorbed. Remove from heat, keeping the cover on to let the rice rest for 10 minutes.

Stir in parsley and pine nuts. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Thoroughly mix in the egg.

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Stuff the squash with the rice mixture, pressing down to compact it and rounding it well over the top. Arrange the squash in a large lightly-greased baking dish and sprinkle bread crumbs over the top. Cover tightly with a lid or aluminum foil and bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake another 5 to 10 minutes, until the bread crumbs are crispy.