

Courgette recipes

Roasted Courgette and Garlic Soup Serves 4

Roasting veggies gives them a unique flavour bringing out their natural sweetness, which makes this soup a really tasty way to use courgettes!

Preparation Time:- Approximately 5 minutes.

Cooking Time:- Approximately 45-50 minutes.

Ingredients:- 2lb (900g) courgettes, 1 onion, 3 garlic cloves, 1 tbsp olive oil, 2 pints vegetable stock, 4 oz (125g) frozen petit pois, 3 tbsp half-fat crème fraiche, black pepper to season

Instructions:- Preheat the oven to gas mark 6, 200C. Cut the ends off the courgettes and thickly slice them into chunks. Peel the onion and cut into eight wedges. Put the courgettes, **unpeeled** garlic, onion and olive oil into a roasting tin and roast for 30-35 minutes until golden and tender.

Pour the stock into a saucepan and bring to the boil. Add the petit pois to the stock and bring back to the boil. Cook for a couple of minutes until the peas are tender.

Take the roasted courgette and garlic out of the oven. Peel the garlic cloves and place them in a blender with the courgettes. Add the stock and petit pois and blend until the soup is smooth. Then season with black pepper. (Alternatively you could add the courgettes and garlic to the stock pan and blend using a hand blender which is what we do – quick and easy!). Stir in the crème fraiche and heat gently.

Handy Hint: - *This soup is lovely served with croutons. For something a little different buy some black olive ciabatta and cut it into cubes. Place the ciabatta cubes on a baking tray and toast in the oven for approximately 5 minutes until they are crisp and sprinkle on top of the soup.*

Stuffed Courgette Boats

Preparation Time:- Approximately 15 minutes.

Cooking Time:- Approximately 30 minutes (a little longer if required).

Ingredients:- Courgettes, onion, finely chopped, tomatoes – fresh (finely chopped) or tinned mushrooms, finely chopped, garlic, finely chopped or crushed, mixed herbs of your choice, fresh or dried

You can judge quantities of the above depending on the size of the courgettes, your personal taste and the amount of people you are cooking for.

For the Topping:- Breadcrumbs (white or brown), Cheese – your favourite type, grated (parmesan works well)

Instructions:- Halve the courgettes lengthways. Remove the flesh in the centre of the courgettes using a teaspoon to create a hollow boat shape. Finely chop the courgette flesh, onions, tomatoes, mushrooms and garlic. Lightly sauté the onions and garlic until they begin to soften. Add the finely chopped courgette flesh, mushrooms, tomatoes, salt, pepper and herbs and sauté for a few minutes.

Stuff the courgette boats. Sprinkle with a mixture of breadcrumbs and grated cheese (variety of your choice) and bake in a pre-heated oven Gas Mark 6/200c(400f) for approximately 30 minutes.

Handy Hint:- To vary this recipe you could also add prawns, chopped ham, chicken livers or whatever takes your fancy! (You may need to vary the cooking times if using any of these additional ingredients).

Courgette & Saffron Risotto – serves 4 as a main course

Courgette does go well in this dish as they are both typically Mediterranean.

Preparation Time: - 15 minutes

Cooking Time: - 30 minutes

Ingredients: - 1.3ltr/2 ¼ pints vegetable stock, 45g/1½ oz butter, 2 tbsp olive oil, 1 large onion finely chopped, 2 bay leaves, 2 courgettes, diced, 350g/12oz risotto rice. Large pinch of saffron strands, 150ml/ ¼ pint white wine, 30g/1oz freshly grated parmesan cheese, plus more for sprinkling. Black pepper and sea salt to season.

Instructions: - Heat the stock and bring to a simmer. Meanwhile melt 30g/ 1oz of butter in a large heavy based pan. Cook the onions with the bay leaves over a moderate heat, stirring frequently. When the onion has softened, stir in the diced courgette and cook for a further minute, then stir in the rice. Allow the rice to absorb any butter and heat for 5 minutes.

Stir in the saffron strands and allow the rice to go a mellow yellow colour. Pour in the wine and stir until the rice has absorbed it.

Add the stock a ladle full at a time, allowing the rice to absorb each ladle before adding the next one, stirring all the time. Carry on doing this for about 20 minutes or until the rice is creamy and just about slides off a spoon. The rice should still have a bit of bite. Add the parmesan and remaining butter and stir through until melted. Season to taste and serve on warm plates, with a sprinkling of fresh parmesan.

Handy Hint: - *Add mushrooms, peas or asparagus for an extra flavour.*

Summer Courgette Salad - Serves 4

This is quite a different way to serve courgette and a lovely fresh salad to accompany a summer barbecue. Also a great side dish for dinner parties. It's really simple to make and very tasty and is one of our favourites!

Preparation Time:- Approximately 10 minutes.

Cooking Time:- A few minutes.

Ingredients:- 4 courgettes, 1 red chilli (deseeded and finely chopped), ½ clove garlic (finely chopped), a handful of fresh mint, extra virgin olive oil, squeeze of lemon, salt & pepper to season..

Instructions:- Slice the courgettes lengthways (as thin as you can). Grill them on the barbecue or on a red hot griddle pan until they are lightly charred on both sides. Place the slices on a large plate making sure you don't sit them on top of each other (as this can make them steam and go limp). While the courgettes are still warm season them with sea salt and black pepper. Sprinkle the chilli and garlic (from a height) evenly over the courgettes. Tear the mint and sprinkle over. Then drizzle with the olive oil (as much as you like) and a squeeze of lemon.

Handy Hint: *You can also add broad beans or sprinkle over some raw peas. This salad goes very well with barbecued or griddled white fish and chicken and pork. You can also add mozzarella or goats cheese. If you have any leftovers you can bake fish fillets on top of the courgettes and make another meal from them! They are also lovely served with steamed rice and seasoned yoghurt.*