

Sweet and Sour Butternut Squash or Pumpkin

This dish belongs to a category of Bangladeshi foods known as bharats. Part relish and part vegetable dish, they add extra flavor to a meal. “We are beginning to find peeled and seeded butternut squash in our supermarkets now, making this dish a snap to make,” Ms. Jaffrey says. Use mustard oil for an authentic Bengali taste, or substitute olive oil. Mustard oil and other Asian ingredients and seasonings like asafetida and urad dal can be found in Indian food stores and specialty shops.

Ingredients

3 tablespoons mustard oil or olive oil

A generous pinch of ground asafetida

1/2 teaspoon whole brown or yellow mustard seeds

4 cups (1 1/4 pounds) peeled and seeded butternut squash or pumpkin, cut into segments 3/4- to 1-inch in size

3/4 to 1 teaspoon salt

1 1/2 teaspoons sugar

1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 tablespoon plain yogurt

2 tablespoons chopped cilantro

Preparation

1. Pour the oil into a frying pan and set over medium heat. When hot, add the asafetida and mustard seeds. As soon as the mustard seeds start to pop, a matter of seconds, add the squash. Continue to cook, stirring, for about 3 minutes, or until the squash pieces just start to brown.

2. Add 1/4 cup of water, cover, turn heat to low, and cook for about 10 minutes, or until the squash is tender.

3. Add the salt, sugar, cayenne and yogurt. Stir and cook, uncovered, over medium heat until the yogurt is absorbed and no longer visible. Sprinkle in the cilantro and stir a few times.

Yield: Serves 4 to 5.