

Tailored For Two

A chef extraordinaire shares delectable, scaled-down recipes.

By Corey Michael Dalton



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is one squash for
dinner for two.”*



Christopher
Kimball

Whether as an empty nester, a newlywed, or a harried parent planning a romantic dinner while the kids are away, odds are you're going to find yourself cooking for two at some point in your life. Most recipes are designed to serve six people, so cooking the right amount can be challenging. “Scaling down recipes is not always as easy as simple division,” says Christopher Kimball, host of PBS' *America's Test Kitchen*. “Many recipes require customization to make them work in smaller quantities.” The chef extraordinaire shares delectable just-for-two recipes from *America's Test Kitchen's Cooking for Two 2011* cookbook.

Stuffed Acorn Squash with Barley

“For this recipe, we used just one squash,” Kimball explains, “which we split, roasted, and then used to bulk up the filling—so there are no leftovers, and all you need is one squash for dinner for two. Plus, barley is a high-fiber, high-protein grain, which increases the satisfaction level and nutrient

quotient of this simple supper. This is a hearty, satisfying, and delicious vegetarian dinner that will woo both veggie fans and meat lovers.” Make sure to use pearl barley, not hulled barley, in this recipe—hulled barley takes much longer to cook.

Ingredients

- 1 small acorn squash (about 1½ pounds), halved and seeded
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- ¼ cup pearl barley
- ½ fennel bulb (about 6 ounces), trimmed of stalks, cored, and chopped fine
- 1 shallot, minced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander
- ¼ teaspoon minced fresh thyme or 1 pinch dried thyme
- 1½ ounces Parmesan cheese, grated (about ¾ cup)
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- 2 tablespoons pine nuts, toasted
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- Balsamic vinegar, for serving

Directions

Adjust oven racks to upper-middle and lower-middle positions and heat oven to 400 degrees. Line rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil and spray

with vegetable oil spray.

Brush cut sides of squash with 1 tablespoon oil, season with salt and pepper, and lay cut-side down on prepared baking sheet. Roast on lower-middle rack until tender (tip of paring knife can be slipped into flesh with no resistance), 45 to 55 minutes. Remove squash from oven and increase oven temperature to 450 degrees.

Meanwhile, bring 2 cups water to boil in small saucepan. Stir in barley and ¼ teaspoon salt and cook until barley is tender, 20 to 25 minutes. Drain and set aside.

Wipe saucepan dry, add remaining 1 tablespoon oil, and heat over medium heat until shimmering. Stir in fennel and shallot and cook until softened and lightly browned, 5 to 7 minutes. Stir in garlic, coriander, and thyme and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds.

Off heat, stir in cooked barley, ½ cup Parmesan, parsley, pine nuts, and butter. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Flip roasted squash over and scoop out flesh, leaving 1/8-inch thickness of flesh in each shell. Gently fold cooked squash into barley mixture, then mound mixture evenly in squash shells. (Stuffed squash can be covered loosely with plastic wrap and refrigerated for up to 4 hours. Finish and bake as directed, increasing baking time to 25 to 30 minutes.)

Sprinkle squash with remaining ¼ cup Parmesan. Bake on upper-middle rack until cheese is melted, 5 to 10 minutes. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar to taste and serve. ►

Per serving

Calories: 547

Fat: 31 g

Sodium: 375 mg

Carbohydrate: 52 g

Fiber: 14 g

Protein: 15 g

Diabetic Exchanges:

1.5 carbohydrate, 1 nonstarchy vegetable, 1 medium-fat cheese, 5.5 fat

Sautéed Pork Cutlets with Mustard-Cider Sauce

“This recipe goes from pan to table in under 15 minutes,” Kimball says, “and has a rich yet brightly flavored sauce that makes it appealing no matter what the temperature outside.”

Ingredients

- 12 ounces boneless country-style pork ribs, trimmed of excess fat, cut and pounded into cutlets
- Salt and pepper
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, cut into 2 pieces
- 1 shallot, minced
- ½ teaspoon unbleached all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup low-sodium chicken broth
- ¼ cup apple cider
- ¼ teaspoon minced fresh sage, parsley, or thyme
- 2 teaspoons whole-grain mustard

Directions

Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 200 degrees. Pat cutlets dry with paper towels and season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle sugar evenly over each cutlet. Heat oil in 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat until just smoking. Add 1 piece butter, let melt, and quickly add cutlets. Cook cutlets until browned on both sides, 2 to 4 minutes. Transfer cutlets to large plate and keep warm in oven while making sauce.

Add shallot to fat left in skillet and cook over medium heat until softened, about 1 minute. Stir in flour and cook for 30 seconds. Whisk in broth, cider, and sage and bring to boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer until slightly thickened, 2 to 3 minutes.

Off heat, whisk in mustard, remaining 1 piece butter, and any accumulated juice from pork. Season sauce with salt and pepper to taste, spoon over pork, and serve. **A**



“This recipe goes from pan to table in under 15 minutes.”

Per serving
Calories: 328
Fat: 24 g
Sodium: 171 mg
Carbohydrate: 7 g
Fiber: 0.3 g

Protein: 21 g
Diabetic Exchanges:
0.25 fruit,
3 medium-fat
meat, 3 fat

 For an additional recipe fit for two, visit saturdayeveningpost.com/recipes-for-2.