

Spicy Cornbread Stuffing with Red Peppers, Chipotle Chiles, and Andouille Sausage

Makes about 12 cups, serving 10 to 12. Published November 1, 2000.

In this recipe, the stuffing is baked outside of the turkey in a baking dish. If you want to stuff your turkey with it, prepare the stuffing through step 2, then follow the directions for microwaving the stuffing as described in the recipe for Roast Stuffed Crisped-Skin Turkey. To make the stuffing a day in advance, increase both the chicken stock and half-and-half by 1/4 cup each and refrigerate the unbaked stuffing 12 to 24 hours; before transferring it to the baking dish, let the stuffing stand at room temperature for about 30 minutes so that it loses its chill. Andouille is a spicy smoked Cajun sausage. If you cannot find any, chorizo makes a fine substitute.

- 12 cups cornbread broken into 1-inch pieces (include crumbs), spread in even layer on 2 baking sheets, and dried in 250-degree oven 50 to 60 minutes
- 3 cups chicken stock or canned low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups half-and-half
- 2 large eggs, beaten lightly
- 8 tablespoons unsalted butter (1 stick), plus extra for baking dish
- 2 red bell peppers, cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 3 medium onions, chopped fine (about 3 cups)
- 3 rib celery, chopped fine (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 4 - 5 chipotle chiles en adobo, chopped (about 4 tablespoons)
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh thyme leaves
- 2 tablespoons fresh sage leaves, minced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 pounds andouille sausage, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons ground black pepper

1. Place cornbread in large bowl. Whisk together stock, half-and-half, and eggs in medium bowl; pour over cornbread and toss very gently to coat so that cornbread does not break into smaller pieces. Set aside.

2. Melt 4 tablespoons butter in heated skillet; when foam subsides, add red bell peppers to skillet along with a third of the onion and celery. Sauté until softened, about 5 minutes, and transfer to medium bowl. Return skillet to heat and add remaining 4 tablespoons butter; when foam subsides, add remaining onion and celery and sauté, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in chipotle chiles en adobo, along with thyme, sage, and garlic. Add this mixture, along with sautéed onions and celery and andouille sausage, into cornbread and mix gently so that cornbread does not break into smaller pieces. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate to blend flavors, at least 1 hour or up to 4 hours.

3. Adjust oven rack to lower-middle position and heat oven to 400 degrees. Butter 10 by 15-inch baking dish (or two 9-inch square or 11- by 7-inch baking dishes). Transfer stuffing to baking dish; pour any liquid accumulated in bottom of bowl over stuffing and, if necessary, gently press stuffing with rubber spatula to fit into baking dish. Bake until golden brown, 35 to 40 minutes.