# Polenta Patchwork with Roast Roots

8 rectangles of baked polenta, each with roasted roots and onion | Active 35 min | Cook 50 min | Total 95 min

## Ingredients

- 180 g quick-cooking polenta: choose a product whose full packet method takes 5-10 minutes and requires 720-840 ml water for 180 g grain
- 720 ml water (3 cups), plus up to 120 ml extra only if its packet requires it
- 80 g/3 oz cheddar, grated
- 2 large eggs, 100 g without shells
- 20 g butter (about 1 1/2 tablespoons), divided 5 g dish and 15 g polenta
- 200 g/7 oz peeled beet, cut into 1 cm/3/8 in cubes
- 250 g/9 oz peeled carrots, cut into 1 cm cubes
- 200 g/7 oz onion, cut into 1 cm pieces
- 30 ml olive oil (2 tablespoons), for vegetables
- 30 ml apple cider vinegar (2 tablespoons)
- 15 g Dijon mustard (about 1 tablespoon)
- 3 g fine salt (1/2 teaspoon), divided 2 g polenta and 1 g vegetables
- 0.5 g black pepper (1/4 teaspoon)

## Set out

Oven, 23 × 33 cm/9 × 13 in shallow baking dish, at least 2 L usable capacity, 40 × 30 cm/16 × 12 in usable roasting tray, Saucepan and whisk, Two bowls, Knife and board, Spoons and broad spatula, Food thermometer, Foil, Shallow storage containers and refrigerator

## Allergens

Milk, Egg, Mustard. Check labels and substitutions.

## Make it

**1.** Heat the oven to 400°F/200°C. Grease the baking dish with 5 g butter. Toss beet, carrot and onion with all 30 ml oil, 1 g salt and the pepper. Keep the three vegetables in separate areas of the roasting tray, in one layer. Roast 30-35 minutes, turning once, until their centers are tender.

**2.** Meanwhile bring 720 ml water to a boil. Whisk in polenta and 2 g salt, then cook for its full packet time, stirring as directed. Add only the listed reserve water if the packet requires it or the grains remain hard; they must be fully cooked, not merely thickened.

**3.** Off the heat, mix 15 g butter and all the cheese into the polenta. Cool 10 minutes, then beat in both eggs. Spread in the prepared dish. Bake 20-25 minutes until set and 165°F/74°C in several central places.

**4.** Mix vinegar and mustard, then toss with all the cooked onion. Rest the polenta 10 minutes and cut 8 equal rectangles. Divide beet, carrot and dressed onion evenly among them, placing the colors alongside each other rather than mixing into a pink heap.

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## Bring it

Pack the 8 topped rectangles in a rigid shallow tray. Maintain 140°F/60°C or above for hot transport, or chill and carry at 40°F/4°C or below. Uncontrolled travel and display share 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C.

## Finish at the gathering

For chilled portions, request a 350°F/180°C oven for 25-35 minutes, covered initially, until the center of each reaches 165°F/74°C. Bring the broad spatula; the host does not need to plate a complicated last-minute pattern.

## Make it yours

Arrange the 8 pieces as two rows of four for a winter buffet, or serve each as a small vegetable first course. Leave an empty margin around the platter rather than adding unmeasured decorative food.

## Ingredient labels

Butter and cheese contain milk; eggs and Dijon are used. Check the polenta and cheese labels for additional ingredients and cross-contact notices.

## A useful detail

Choose a quick-polenta product whose full 180 g packet method uses 720-840 ml total water; a product requiring more water or longer cooking is unsuitable for this stated batch. Vegetables roast while the polenta is cooked, cooled and baked. The 95-minute total includes preparation, these overlapping stages and the final rest; actual tenderness still controls.

## Another way

Use 200 g prepared sweet potato in place of beet; roast until tender.

Use 80 g mature Gouda instead of cheddar; the milk allergen remains.

## Keep it well

Refrigerate shallow portions promptly at 40°F/4°C or below and use within 3 days. Retain the original cooking date if components were made earlier, and follow the Bring it handling limits. Reheat to 165°F/74°C; the base softens somewhat under the vegetables.