Baked Eggs in Pepper Ricotta Boats

4 filled pepper halves; 2 meals of 2 halves and 1 slice of bread · Active 35 min · Total 1 hr 25 min

Skills: Beginner with ordinary kitchen equipment

Ingredients

- 2 large broad bell peppers, halved lengthways and seeds removed (500 g prepared)
- 4 large eggs (about 200 g edible, shells removed)
- 2/3 cup part-skim ricotta (160 g)
- About 3 packed cups spinach, washed (80 g)
- 2 teaspoons olive oil (10 ml/about 9 g), divided
- 1/4 teaspoon fine salt (1.5 g)
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper (0.3 g)
- 2 slices whole-wheat bread (80 g total)

Set out

9 by 13-inch/23 by 33 cm baking dish, Small nonstick skillet, Mixing bowl, Small cup for cracking eggs, Spoon, Clean sieve and spoon for pressing spinach, Knife and board, Kitchen scale, Foil, Food thermometer, Oven mitts, 2 plates

Allergens

Egg, Milk, Wheat; check bread labels for sesame or other added allergens. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat the oven to 375°F/190°C. Brush pepper halves with 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of the oil and arrange cut-side up in the baking dish. Roast for 20 minutes until beginning to soften. Remove the dish, tip any liquid from the cavities into the dish and leave the oven on.

2. Meanwhile heat the remaining oil in the small skillet over medium heat. Add spinach and cook for 2–3 minutes until completely wilted. Put in a clean sieve, cool enough to handle and press out excess liquid. Chop and mix with ricotta, salt and pepper.

3. Divide the ricotta mixture among the 4 pepper halves, about 1/4 of the mixture each. Make a hollow in each with a spoon. Crack 1 egg into the small cup, then slide it into one hollow. Repeat for all 4 eggs. Do not overfill a very small cavity: use broad peppers of the stated size.

4. Bake for 25–35 minutes until peppers are tender, egg whites and yolks are firm and the egg centers reach at least 160°F/71°C. If pepper edges brown early, loosely tent with foil without touching the eggs. Leave for 5 minutes, then serve 2 halves per person with 1 bread slice.

A useful kitchen skill

Part-roast a vegetable shell and check its usable cavity before filling; egg whites and yolks must set, not merely look warm around the edges.

A useful detail

The 85-minute total allows pepper preparation, the preliminary roast, filling, final egg setting and a brief rest. The estimate counts the full spinach weight and oil, although a little moisture is pressed out. Raw red pepper is the color basis.

Keep it well

Refrigerate promptly in shallow containers at 40°F/4°C or below within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C. Use within 3 days. Reheat the portion needed in a covered dish until the egg and filling centers reach 165°F/74°C. Keep bread separate. These eggs are best freshly baked; do not leave filled boats unrefrigerated while waiting for another meal.