Pork Mince and White Bean Stuffed Courgettes

4 filled courgette halves;2 meals of 2 halves each · Active 45 min · Total 1 hr 25 min

Skills: Beginner with ordinary kitchen equipment

Ingredients

- 2 large broad courgettes/zucchini, stems trimmed (800 g edible whole vegetables)
- 5 1/3 oz raw ground pork (150 g)
- About 3/4 cup fully cooked unsalted white beans, drained (120 g)
- 1 small onion, finely diced (60 g)
- 1 garlic clove, minced (3 g)
- 1/4 can crushed tomatoes with juice (100 g)
- 1 teaspoon olive oil (5 ml/about 4.5 g)
- 2/3 cup loosely grated cheddar (60 g)
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano (1 g)
- 1/4 teaspoon fine salt (1.5 g)
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper (0.3 g)

Set out

Large rimmed baking tray about 12 by 16 inches/30 by 40 cm, Baking paper, 28 cm/11-inch nonstick skillet, Teaspoon for scooping, Broad spoon, Knife and board, Grater, Kitchen scale, Food thermometer, Oven mitts, 2 plates

Allergens

Milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat the oven to 400°F/200°C and line the tray. Halve courgettes lengthways and scoop out the soft centers, leaving shells about 1/2 inch/1 cm thick. Keep and finely chop all scooped pulp. Put shells cut-side up on the tray and roast for 15 minutes. Remove and set aside while filling finishes, leaving the oven on.

2. Meanwhile heat oil in the nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and all chopped courgette pulp. Cook for 10–14 minutes, stirring, until softened and the released water has largely evaporated.

3. Add pork, break into small crumbles and cook for 6–8 minutes until a gathered thick portion reaches 160°F/71°C. Stir in garlic for 30 seconds. Add tomatoes, oregano, salt and pepper and simmer uncovered for 5–7 minutes until thick rather than watery.

4. Fold in cooked drained beans, lightly mashing about one-third with the spoon. Heat for 3–4 minutes until the filling is hot. Divide it evenly among the 4 softened shells, making modest stable mounds. Sprinkle each with one-quarter of the measured cheddar.

5. Bake for 18–22 minutes until courgette shells are tender enough to cut with a fork and filling centers reach 165°F/74°C. Serve 2 halves per person, dividing all filling and cheese between the 2 meals.

A useful kitchen skill

Reduce scooped vegetable pulp before returning it as filling, and use shells large enough for the actual mixture.

A useful detail

All 800 g of edible courgette is included: shells and scooped centers. The wide tray supports four broad lengthwise halves. The pork and beans are modest portions balanced by measured cheese; cooked beans begin ready to use.

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 or the original cooked beans' remaining safe window, whichever is shorter. Reheat filled halves to 165°F/74°C throughout. Courgettes become softer and wetter after freezing, so refrigerated portions give a neater result.