

SAVORY SWEET POTATO CASSEROLE



Ingredients:

Sweet Potato Casserole:

2 lbs Sweet potatoes
1/2 lb Russet potatoes
4-5 Calabrian Chili
2 Tablespoons of Unsalted Butter
2-3 Sage
2-3 Bunches of Thyme
2 Heads of Garlic
1 Cup of Olive Oil
1 Egg
Salt to taste

Crunchy Pecan Topping:

2 cups of pecans (chopped)
1/4 cup flour
1/4 cup Olive Oil (In this case, the garlic confit oil)
2 Tablespoons of Maple Syrup
1 teaspoon of Kosher Salt

Whipped Ricotta Topping:

2 cups of Whole Milk Ricotta
1/4 cup of Extra Virgin Olive Oil
1 Teaspoon of Kosher Salt

Directions

- Poke the potatoes with a fork all around and then lightly coat with oil and salt and then roast the potatoes at 400 F degrees until they are fork-tender or reach an internal temp of 205-212 F. It should take roughly 1 hour or so depending on the size of the sweet potatoes.
- While that cooks, peel two heads of garlic and add the cloves to a small pot. Tie some sage and thyme in a bundle tightly and then add to the pot. Add enough extra virgin olive oil to cover the garlic and herbs and add a little salt. Place on the stove and bring it to a very gentle simmer and maintain that very slow simmer for about 1 hour or so, or until the garlic is so soft that it falls apart when mashed. Don't walk away from that pot too long to ensure the oil never gets too hot. You can also do this in the oven, but the potatoes are in the oven cooking at too high a temp to confit anything, but you can also confit on the stovetop. Once the garlic is soft, remove from the heat and let cool slightly.
- Once the garlic is cooled enough, you want to puree them with a few tablespoons of garlic oil and about 4-5 Calabrian chilies. I used an immersion blender which requires a tall narrow container to puree it. Otherwise, a blender works fine. The result should be a thick, orange creamy substance that almost resembles a mayo.
- The potatoes should be done, get them out of the oven and let them cool enough to handle. Then peel the skins of the potatoes, add a few tablespoons of unsalted butter, the roasted garlic chili puree, and a little of the garlic oil. Mash until the mixture becomes smooth and creamy. Taste to adjust the seasoning, then mix in 1 egg to the mixture.
- Mix the chopped nuts, the flour, the oil from the garlic confit, maple syrup, and salt together and mix to combine.
- In a 2 qt casserole dish, add the potatoes, then top with the nut mixture. If you're prepping this the day before Thanksgiving, now you can let it cool, cover it, and put it in the fridge until the next day. To bake, let it come to room temp an hour before you want to cook, and then follow the rest of the recipe as normal. Otherwise, bake the casserole at 400 f degrees for about 40 minutes to an hour until the nuts get toasted and browned but not burnt.
- While that cooks, prepare the ricotta topping by blending the ricotta with the garlic oil (or regular olive oil is fine) and salt until the ricotta becomes smooth, thick, and creamy almost like a frosting. Then place that into a piping bag or ziplock bag and set it aside until the casserole is done.
- Once the casserole is done cooking, take it out and then pipe little peaks across the entire surface of the casserole, making sure no nuts are really exposed otherwise they might burn from the broiler. Once the casserole is topped with the faux marshmallow topping, place that directly under the broiler and toast the ricotta until it's just speckled with a light char, the same way you would toast marshmallows. Once it's nicely browned, pull out the casserole and let it rest.
- Before serving, to add a bit of color and bitterness, I like to add some baby watercress and spicy microgreens. It just adds a nice balance to the dish along with some greens, but this step is optional. Plate a spoonful on to the plate and finish with a final drizzle of the garlic oil.