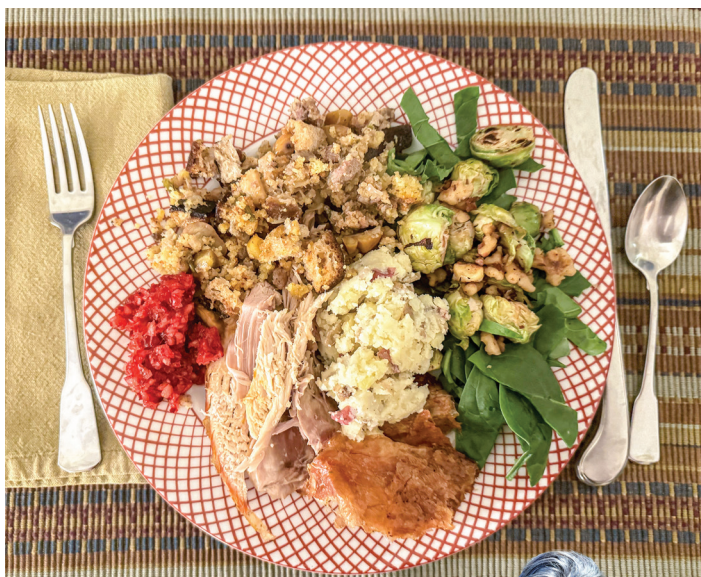




WELL SEASONED

BY SUZANNE PODHAIZER

Chestnut and Sausage Stuffing

The combination of pork sausage and chestnuts makes this stuffing super delicious. For over two decades, my family has been making some variation on this recipe for Thanksgiving. We'll switch up the type of sausage, the seasonings and the type of bread, but we never make it without the chestnuts. For a bit of extra flavor, add a couple of chopped apples to the bread, sausage, chestnut and onion mixture.

INGREDIENTS:

14ish cups bread cubes from high-quality loaves, left out to become stale, or tossed lightly in oil and gently toasted until crunchy
 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
 2 large onions, diced 5 stalks celery, diced
 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt or coarse sea salt
 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
 6 cloves garlic, minced or grated
 2 pounds bulk pork sausage (chorizo, breakfast sausage, and Italian sausage all work)
 2 tablespoons minced fresh sage
 2 tablespoons minced fresh rosemary

1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
 Parsley, if desired
 1 pound cooked chestnuts, chopped
 2 eggs
 1 quart turkey or chicken broth, plus 2 additional cups

Melt the butter in a large saucepan, and add the onions, celery, salt and pepper. Cook until the vegetables are softened and the onions are translucent. Add the garlic and sausage, and cook, stirring, to brown the meat, breaking up clumps as you go. When the meat is cooked through, add the sage, rosemary and thyme, as well as parsley if desired. Then, mix in the chopped chestnuts.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Transfer the chestnut and sausage mixture to the largest bowl you have, and mix with the dried bread cubes. In another bowl, whisk together the eggs and one quart broth. Toss with the bread cubes and let sit for 10 minutes so the bread can absorb the liquid. If, after that time, it seems particularly dry, add up to two more cups of stock.

Pack the bread mixture generously into a buttered 9-by-13-inch baking dish, and put any spillover into another baking dish that makes sense for the amount you have remaining. Cover the stuffing with foil and bake for 35 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for 25 minutes more, or until the top is golden and crisp. If, when you remove the foil, the stuffing looks particularly dry, sprinkle on additional liquid.

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