

Zucchini, Corn, and Poblano Gratin

Thank you to CSA member, Jen Kelly, for this recipe.

Serves 6 as a side dish

3 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for dish
1 large onion, chopped
Salt and black pepper
3 garlic cloves, minced
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
5 cups corn kernels, cut from 5 large ears of corn
4 medium poblano peppers, charred, peeled, seeded, and chopped (1 scant cup)
2 teaspoons minced fresh oregano
1½ cups (about 6 ounces) crumbled queso fresco
4 medium zucchini (about 2 pounds), cut into 1/2-inch slices and prepared for baking (see Kitchen Aide)
1 cup fresh bread crumbs

In a medium skillet, heat 1 tablespoon oil until it shimmers. Add the onion and 1/2 teaspoon of salt, and cook, stirring frequently, until soft and golden, about 5 minutes. Add 1 clove minced garlic and the cumin, and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 45 seconds. In a large bowl, stir together the onion mixture, corn, poblanos, oregano, black pepper to taste, and 1/2 cup queso fresco.

Set the oven rack in the middle position and heat to 400 degrees. Grease a shallow 2-quart baking dish with oil and spread the onion-corn mixture into an even layer.

Toss the zucchini, 1 tablespoon oil, the remaining garlic, and black pepper to taste. Shingle the zucchini over the corn mixture and bake until just tender, about 12 minutes.

Meanwhile, in the same bowl, toss the remaining queso fresco, bread crumbs, remaining oil, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and black pepper to taste.

Remove the baking dish from the oven, sprinkle bread crumb mixture evenly over the zucchini, return the gratin to the oven, and bake until the topping is lightly browned, about 12 minutes longer.

Allow the gratin to stand for at least 5 minutes and serve.

Kitchen Aide: Salting zucchini

Zucchini's high liquid content can cause it to go soft and mushy in the oven. I salt zucchini before baking it to draw out some of the water. Here's how. In a colander set

over a bowl, toss 2 pounds of sliced zucchini with 2 teaspoons salt and let drain for about an hour. (After only a few minutes, you'll see liquid starting to bead.) Before cooking, rinse off the salt, spread the squash in a single layer and blot dry with more paper towels, pressing firmly to absorb as much liquid as possible (it's OK if the slices become compressed).