

Mark Bittman's Autumn Millet Bake Recipe

I screwed up a bit and used dried cranberries. If you are referencing the photo, you'll notice the shrivel factor. Still good. You can make this vegan, vegetarian, I used a bit of cream - but you can use just stock or water. The real trick is getting the millet to cook all the way though, so don't over toast it, and keep adding liquids if you need to.*

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil, plus oil for the dish
3/4 cup millet
1 medium butternut or other winter squash or 1 small pumpkin, peeled seeded and cut into 1-inch cubes
1 cup fresh cranberries
Salt and freshly ground pepper
1 tablespoon minced sage leaves or 1 teaspoon dried
2 tablespoons maple syrup or honey
1 cup vegetable stock or water, warmed*
1/4 cup pumpkin seeds or coarsely chopped hazelnuts

Preheat the oven to 375F and grease a 2-quart casserole, a large gratin dish, or a 9x13-inch baking dish with olive oil.

Put 2 tablespoons of the oil in a small skillet over medium-high heat. When hot, add the millet and cook, stirring frequently, until fragrant and golden, about 3 minutes (hs note: don't overdo it). Spread in the bottom of the prepared baking dish.

Scatter the squash or pumpkin cubes and the cranberries on top of the millet. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and the sage and drizzle with syrup. Carefully pour the warmed stock over all (hs note: I did about 1/2 cup stock & 1/2 cup cream based on one of his variations). Cover tightly with foil and bake without disturbing, for 45 minutes.

Carefully uncover and turn the oven to 400F. As discreetly as possible, sneak a taste and adjust the seasoning. If it looks too dry, add a spoonful or two of water or stock. (hs note: This is key! The millet should be close to being cooked through at this point, if not you need to add liquid and keep it moist and cooking - I used another 1/4 cup+ of stock here). Sprinkle the pumpkin seeds on top, and return the dish to the oven. Bake until the mixture bubbles and the top is browned (hs note: and the millet is cooked through), another 10 minutes or so. Serve piping hot or at room temperature (hs note: drizzled with the remaining olive oil if you like).

Serves 4 to 6.

*In the end, I used 3/4 cup stock + 1/2 cup cream