

# KITCHEN AFFAIRS

*for the serious cook*

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**With Special Guest:  
Sara Corrigan, Features Columnist with the Evansville Courier**

## **PUMPKIN STUFFED with CRANBERRY COMPOTE**

(Yields 12 servings or more)

(Recipe is from Marilyn Kluger, Newburgh Indiana)

1 whole pumpkin (about 9 pounds)  
1 TaBleSPoon vegetable oil  
2 cups white sugar  
1 cup brown sugar  
1¼ cups fresh apple cider or orange juice  
2 cups fresh cranberries  
8 ounces mixed dried fruits, (large pieces) cut into pieces about the size of pecan halves  
4 cups apple, peeled, cored and sliced as for pie  
1 cup golden raisins  
2 cups pecan halves  
2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice mixture

1. Select a round, squat pumpkin (rather than a tall one) with a flat bottom and top so that it will stand straight and juices will not run over the top. Wash and dry the outside of the pumpkin. Cut the top out as you would for a jack-o-lantern, making the opening large enough to fit a serving spoon both to fill the pumpkin and to serve from it. Scoop out the seeds and stringy membranes.
2. Rinse out the inside of the pumpkin with water, then invert it over a rack to drain. If the pumpkin is significantly smaller or larger than 9 pounds, fill it with water then pour the water out and measure the water to determine the pumpkin's capacity and to judge how much fruit you will need.
3. Oil the outside of the pumpkin and its lid with vegetable oil. Place the lid on pumpkin then set it into a large shallow pan or oven-proof bowl that will hold it upright and place it into a 250°F. oven for 1 hour.
4. Meanwhile, combine the sugars and cider in a large heavy pan set over medium heat and stir until the sugars are completely dissolved and the mixture comes to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and stir in the fruits, nuts and pumpkin pie spice (do not let mixture boil; you may elect to turn the heat off entirely).
5. When the empty pumpkin has baked 1 hour, remove it from the oven and fill it with the fruit mixture, leaving at least 1 inch of head room so the bubbling fruit juices will not spill over the top (also, the pumpkin will shrink some during cooking).
6. Replace the lid and cover the stem with foil to protect it. Return the filled pumpkin to the hot oven and bake for about 6 hours, checking after 5 hours to see if the pumpkin is soft.
7. Carefully remove the lid and stir the fruits once or twice during the cooking time. Smaller sized pumpkins with cook in less time. Plan accordingly.
8. You will be able to see when the pumpkin and fruits are cooked; pierce the pumpkin flesh near the top of the pumpkin to test for tenderness. The outside of the pumpkin will be a beautiful, burnished, crackled orange color.
9. To serve, place the pumpkin onto a decorative serving platter. Remove the lid and scoop out servings of fruit, scraping a bit of the pumpkin flesh along with each serving.
10. Serve warm or cooled with vanilla ice cream, whipped cream or sweetened heavy cream.