

Idiot's Kitchen Recipe – Stuffed Artichokes (with blue cheese)

Recipe from www.idiotskitchen.com



Ingredients:

2 Whole Artichokes
1 lemon
2 cloves garlic, pressed or finely minced
½ cup bread crumbs
2-3 Tablespoons olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
¼ cup grated Parmesan or Romano cheese
¼ cup blue cheese, crumbled (optional but highly recommended)
Freshly cracked black pepper

Bring a large pot of water to a boil over high heat.

Prepare the artichokes by cutting off the stem and removing the outer, tough, small leaves near the base. Use a sturdy, sharp knife to cut the top ½-1 inch off of each artichoke exposing the layers and the heart. Use scissors or kitchen shears to cut the little thorns off of any remaining outer leaves. Immediately rub the cut parts of the artichoke with lemon to keep them from turning brown.

When the water is boiling, season it with 1 Tablespoon of salt and add the artichokes to the pot. Squeeze any remaining juice from the lemon halves and toss them in the pot. Boil the artichokes, uncovered, 20-25 minutes or until tender and an outer leaf can easily be removed.

While the artichokes cook, prepare the filling by pressing or finely chopping 2 small cloves of garlic. Add the garlic to a small bowl with ½ cup of bread crumbs. You can use Italian seasoned bread crumbs or plain bread crumbs and add your own basil, oregano, or other seasonings to taste. Stir in 2-3 Tablespoons of olive oil until the breadcrumbs have the texture of wet sand. Add ¼ cup of grated Parmesan cheese and lots of freshly cracked black pepper. Stir to combine.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

When the artichokes are done, transfer them from the boiling water to a bowl filled with ice water to stop the cooking, shock them, and preserve the green color. When the artichokes have cooled slightly

drain them on a paper towel. Gently spread the leaves of the artichoke apart to expose the purple “choke” at the center. Use your fingers and a spoon to gently scrape away these tiny center leaves that have purple edges. You can see that each of these little leaves has a tiny little spiny thorn that you want to remove until you see the heart at the bottom of the artichoke.

Fill the center of each cleaned artichoke with a spoonful of the breadcrumb filling. Gently spread the outer leaves apart and use your fingers to drop breadcrumbs between the layers. For extra flavor, add 1-2 Tablespoons of crumbled blue cheese to the center and between the outer leaves of each artichoke.

Place the stuffed artichokes in a shallow baking dish and drizzle the tops with olive oil. Bake at 350 degrees for 10-15 minutes until the cheese is melted and the breadcrumbs are golden brown.

To eat the artichokes, peel off the outer leaves and scrape them against your teeth to get the little bit of “meat” and any cheese and crumbs at the bottom of each leaf. Continue to pull and scrape, discarding the leaves, until you get to the heart of the artichoke. Cut the heart into quarters and enjoy!

If served as an appetizer, plan on one large artichoke for 2 people. Personally, I like to have my own artichoke because I’m piggy.