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## A cheesy twist for cauliflower

By Susie Iventosch



Roasted and stuffed cauliflower Photo Susie Iventosch

buy an extra pastry bag for savory occasions such as this.

I was looking for a new and interesting way to serve cauliflower and came across a recipe on the Food Network that looked amazing! It called for stuffing the cauliflower with a cheesy mixture and then coating it with a panko crust before baking. I've now seen this done with many different kinds of fillings, from Middle Eastern flavors such as garam masala to ground meats like beef or turkey. You can even roast the whole head of cauliflower with no filling at all, just using an herb and panko crust for a crunchy outside edge. We decided to stuff ours with a sharp cheddar-arugula filling and it turned out great, but you could easily use spinach or meat, along with your favorite cheese. When you get ready to stuff the cauliflower, it is best to have a pastry bag on hand. I tried using a large plastic baggie, but it broke at the seam part way through, and I had to resort to hand-stuffing with a small spoon and my fingers. I didn't want to use my only pastry bag, because I use it to frost cupcakes and didn't want the onion flavor to infiltrate my next batch of frosting. But, I will definitely

Whole Cauliflower Roasted and Stuffed

### INGREDIENTS

1 whole head of cauliflower, white, orange or purple

Filling

2 Tbsp. olive oil

1 small yellow onion, finely chopped

1 large shallot, finely chopped

1 clove garlic, minced

5 ounces (approximately) arugula, finely chopped

4 slices of turkey bacon (or regular bacon) cooked and cut

into small pieces

2 eggs

1 1/2 cups grated sharp white cheddar cheese

1/4 cup Half &amp; Half or milk

1/2 cup panko 1/2 tsp. salt

1 tsp. black pepper

Crust

Mix together:

1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan

1/4 cup panko

4 Tbsp. melted butter

### DIRECTIONS

Prepare cauliflower by removing all the leaves (including carefully removing inner leaves) and enough of the stem to make the bottom of the head of cauliflower flat enough to sit on a baking tray. When the cauliflower is turned upside down, you will see all kinds of nooks and crannies, into which you will pipe the filling. Be careful not to break any of the florets or stems as you clear off the leaves.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil and cook the entire head of cauliflower for 8 minutes. This is just a partial cooking, so be sure not to cook all the way through. The timing may vary depending upon the size of your cauliflower. Remove from water, drain and cool. Set aside.

Meanwhile, heat olive oil in frying pan and cook onions, shallots and garlic until translucent. Add chopped arugula and continue to cook until arugula is wilted. Remove from heat and cool for about 5 minutes. Transfer the onion mixture to a mixing bowl. Add remaining filling ingredients and mix well.

Place the filling mixture into a pastry bag, fitted with a wide tip. You can also just use the coupler and the regular bag opening, to squeeze the filling into the cauliflower. If you do not have a pastry bag, then you can stuff the cauliflower using a small spoon and your fingers, pushing the filling deep in between the florets and reaching the center and beyond, toward the top of the cauliflower.

Once all of the filling has been used, turn the cauliflower right side up on a greased baking sheet. Now, using your hands, pat the crust mixture all around the cauliflower to make a nice coating all the way around, except the bottom.

Bake at 400 F for approximately 30 to 35 minutes, until crust is golden brown and a knife inserts easily into the cauliflower. Slice in wedges and serve hot!



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