

COOK'S

ILLUSTRATED

Classic Bread Stuffing for a Crowd

Ingredients

12 tablespoons unsalted butter (1 ½ sticks), plus extra for baking dish
4 medium ribs celery, chopped fine
2 medium onions, minced
½ cup minced fresh parsley leaves
3 tablespoons minced fresh sage leaves or 2 teaspoons dried
3 tablespoons minced fresh thyme leaves or 2 teaspoons dried
1 tablespoon minced fresh marjoram leaves or 1 teaspoon dried
3 pounds high-quality sandwich bread slices (white), cut into ½-inch cubes and dried (see note)
5 cups chicken stock or low-sodium canned chicken broth
4 large eggs, beaten lightly
2 teaspoons table salt
2 teaspoons ground black pepper



Serves 16

Instructions

Drying the bread before making the stuffing is crucial for texture and flavor. If you plan ahead, you can simply leave the bread cubes out on the counter for a few days to become stale. Otherwise, spread them out on baking sheets and dry in a 300-degree oven for 30 to 60 minutes. Let the bread cool before using in the stuffing. You can substitute three 14-ounce bags of plain dried bread cubes for the homemade dried bread cubes, but you'll need to increase the amount of chicken broth to 7 cups. This recipe can easily be halved and baked in a 13 by 9-inch baking dish for a smaller crowd.

1. Adjust oven rack to center position and heat oven to 400 degrees. Heat butter in 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Add the celery and onion and sauté, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 10 minutes. Stir in parsley, sage, thyme, and marjoram and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute longer. Transfer to a very large mixing bowl.
2. Add the dried, cooled bread, stock or broth, eggs, salt, and pepper to the vegetables and toss gently to distribute dry and wet ingredients evenly. Turn mixture into buttered 15-x 10-inch baking dish.
3. Cover with foil and bake for 25 minutes. Remove the foil and continue to bake until golden, about 30 minutes longer. Cool for 10 minutes before serving.

To Make Ahead: The stuffing can be assembled in the baking dish, then wrapped tightly in plastic wrap and refrigerated for up to 24 hours before baking. To bake, let the stuffing stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Remove the plastic wrap and proceed to bake as directed in step 3.