



eats

## Pumpkin Puree

By Therese Gustin

Cinderella, Jack-be-Little, Jack-be-Quick, Casper...these may sound like characters in a children's book but really they are all names for different varieties of pumpkins! Most of us use our pumpkins for fall decorating, but did you know you can easily make your own pies, cookies and other desserts with fresh pumpkin meat?

The pumpkins we commonly see sold in the fall are ideal for carving but a little watery for use in baking. If you plan on using fresh pumpkin in your recipes try one of these varieties for better results: Sugar Pie or Sweet Pie, Small Sugar or New England Pie, Sugar Baby, Lumina (white skin but yellow flesh), Autumn Gold, Prize Winner (very large), Spirit, Spookie, and Triple Treat (for carving and pies.)



When selecting a pie pumpkin, look for a pumpkin with 1 to 2 inches of stem left. If the stem is too short, the pumpkin will decay quickly or may be decaying at the time of purchase. Check for blemishes and soft spots and avoid these pumpkins. A lopsided pumpkin is not necessarily a bad pumpkin; just make sure the pumpkin is heavy. As a rule, one pound of raw, untrimmed pumpkin equals one cup of finished pumpkin puree.

When preparing the pumpkin for cooking, spread newspaper over your work area. Take off the stem with a sharp knife. If you are planning to roast the pumpkin seeds, smash the pumpkin against a hard surface to break it open. If not, cut it in half with a sharp knife. In any case, after removing the stem scoop out the seeds and scrape away all of the stringy mass.



The easiest way to prepare the pumpkin is using the Boiling/Steaming Method: Cut the pumpkin into large chunks. Rinse in cold water. Place pieces in a large pot with about a cup of water. The water does not need to cover the pumpkin pieces. Cover the pot and boil for 20 to 30 minutes or until tender, or steam for 10 to 12 minutes. Check for doneness by poking with a fork. The pumpkin should be fairly soft. Drain the cooked pumpkin in a colander. You can even save the liquid and use it as a base for soup.

After the pumpkin is cool enough to handle, remove the peel using a small sharp knife and your fingers. Put the peeled pumpkin in a food processor and puree or use a food mill, ricer, strainer or potato masher to form a puree.

Pumpkin puree freezes well. To freeze, measure cooled puree into one cup portions, place in rigid freezer containers, leaving 1/2-inch headspace or pack into freezer bags. Label, date and freeze at 0°F for up to one year.

Use this puree as a substitute for any recipe calling for solid pack canned pumpkin.

So visit your local farm, Farmer's Market or grocery store and try a recipe using fresh pumpkin puree this fall.



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## Pumpkin Puree...continued

### My mother's fabulous 'Heavenly Pumpkin Pie'

#### Ingredients:

1 small pkg. vanilla cook & serve pudding (not instant)  
 ¼ cup packed brown sugar  
 ¼ tsp. ground ginger  
 ½ tsp. nutmeg  
 ¾ tsp. cinnamon  
 ¼ tsp. salt  
 1 ¼ cup milk  
 1 ¾ cup mashed pumpkin  
 1 Tbs. butter  
 1 9" pie shell baked or I prefer graham cracker

#### Directions:

Combine pudding mix, sugar, spices, milk and butter in a saucepan. Cook and stir over medium heat until mixture comes to a full boil. Remove from heat, cool 5 minutes. Stir in pumpkin. Pour into cooled pie shell and chill until firm.

### William McClenathan's Pumpkin Roll

#### Cake Ingredients:

3 eggs  
 ¾ cup sugar  
 2/3 cup canned pumpkin (fresh can be substituted)  
 1 teaspoon lemon juice  
 ¾ cup flour  
 1 teaspoon baking powder  
 2 teaspoons cinnamon  
 1 teaspoon ginger  
 ½ teaspoon nutmeg  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 1 cup finely chopped nuts

#### Filling Ingredients:

1 cup powdered sugar  
 6 oz. cream cheese  
 4 tablespoons butter, soft  
 ½ teaspoon vanilla

#### Cake Direction:

Beat eggs for five minutes while gradually adding sugar. Stir in pumpkin and lemon juice. Sift dry ingredients together and add to egg mixture. Grease and line with wax paper a 15 in. wide cookie sheet. It must be one with an edge of at least ½ inch. Spread batter evenly and sprinkle with the chopped nuts. Bake at 350 degrees for 10-15 minutes. Cake is done when it still looks a little moist but feels dry to the touch and bounces back when touched with index finger. Remove from oven and turn upside down on a tea towel sprinkled with powdered sugar. Remove wax paper and roll up cake like a jelly roll. Cool. When completely cooled, unroll and spread with cream cheese mixture [see below]. Reroll and keep refrigerated. When ready to serve remove from refrigerator, cut off ends and sprinkle roll with powdered sugar.

#### Cream Cheese Filling Directions:

Cream the powdered sugar with the cream cheese. And in soft butter and vanilla. Mix until smooth and creamy.