



ANSON MILLS

Charleston Gold Brown Rice Stuffing

Yield

8 side dish portions

Time

Overnight to soak the rice, about 40 minutes to prep, and about 45 minutes to bake

Cooking Remarks

This, being *brown* rice, can take a stovetop parcook followed by a spell in the oven without overcooking. To coax the best possible performance and fullest flavor expression in the grains, however, please soak the rice overnight in water at room temperature. If you forget, minimally give the grains a 4-hour soak.

We call for the rice to cook at your stove's "lowest possible setting." If, however, you're working on an electric range, the lowest possible setting may well be inadequate. On the other hand, if you're working with a professional-strength gas burner, low heat may be too high and you may need a flame tamer. Use your judgement.

Reheat leftover stuffing in a 325-degree oven until warmed through, about 30 minutes. It is also very good cold.

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe, you will need a medium bowl and a large bowl, a colander, a heavy-bottomed medium saucepan, aluminum foil, a heavy-bottomed 12-inch skillet, a 2-cup liquid measuring cup, a small whisk, a 2-quart broilersafe casserole, and a basting brush.

Ingredients

2 cups (14 ounces) Anson Mills Charleston Gold Brown Rice, rinsed and drained
3 cups Rich Homemade Chicken Stock
1 small Turkish bay leaf
Fine sea salt
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
12 ounces bulk pork breakfast sausage
1 tablespoon unsalted butter, plus 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, room temperature
2 cups minced yellow onion (about 2 medium)
1 cup finely diced celery
12 ounces portobello mushrooms, stemmed, scraped of gills, and finely diced
1 tablespoon minced garlic
½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
Pinch of ground nutmeg
¼ cup minced fresh sage leaves

1 tablespoon minced fresh thyme leaves
1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
Freshly ground black pepper
2 large eggs
½ cup half-and-half

Directions

1. The night before you plan to make the stuffing, turn the rice into a medium bowl, add water to cover, and let it soak at room temperature until the following morning. Should you find yourself short on time, 4 hours will be adequate.

2. Drain the rice in a colander and shake the colander well—*really* well. Pour 2 cups of the stock into a heavy-bottomed medium saucepan. Wrap the pan's lid in aluminum foil. Add the bay leaf and 1 teaspoon salt and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Stir in the rice, cover, and reduce the heat to the lowest possible setting. Cook gently without peeking for 25 minutes. Uncover the pot and have a look. The rice should have absorbed nearly, if not all, of the stock and look plump and inviting. It will be mostly done but still slightly al dente. Give it a stir. If the rice is still very firm and there is liquid remaining in the saucepan, re-cover the pan and return it to low heat for 5 minutes more, and then check again. Turn the rice into a large bowl and set it aside.

3. In a heavy-bottomed 12-inch skillet, warm the olive oil over medium heat. Break the sausage into smallish chunks and lay them in the skillet. Cook without stirring for a few minutes, and then scrape up and turn the sausage and continue to cook, breaking up the larger pieces, until the sausage is nicely browned, about 7 minutes total. Transfer the sausage to the bowl with the rice. Return the skillet to medium heat and melt the 1 tablespoon butter. Add the onion and cook until golden brown, stirring frequently, about 10 minutes. Add the celery and cook, stirring occasionally, until just tender, about 3 minutes. Add the mushrooms and cook until they release their juices, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir the garlic into the vegetables and sauté until its aroma blooms, about 10 seconds. Remove from the heat. Add the red pepper flakes, nutmeg, sage, thyme, lemon zest, ¼ teaspoon salt (or more if your sausage isn't very salty), and ½ teaspoon black pepper. Stir to combine. Taste for seasoning, and then turn the mixture into the bowl with the rice and sausage.

4. Adjust oven racks to the middle and upper-middle positions and heat the oven to 350 degrees. Coat a 2-quart broilersafe casserole with 1 tablespoon of the room-temperature butter and set it aside. In a 2-cup liquid measuring cup, whisk together the eggs, the remaining 1 cup chicken stock, and the half-and-half. Pour this over the rice mixture and mix well.

5. Turn the stuffing into the prepared casserole, distributing it in an even layer. Cover with foil and bake on the middle rack for 40 minutes. Remove the casserole from the oven and take a peek under the foil. It should be firm and have absorbed all the liquid. If this is not the case, replace the foil and return the casserole to the oven for 5 to 10 minutes longer. Remove the casserole from the oven and heat the broiler. Uncover the stuffing and brush the top with the remaining 1 tablespoon room-temperature butter. Broil on the upper rack until the surface is crisp and browned; timing will vary depending on your broiler, so watch carefully. Serve hot.