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Cooking with the Club

with Chef Robert Larios



STUFFED TURNIPS

This is the first time I have used turnips in a “Cooking with the Club” column, but make no mistake, turnips are wonderful root vegetables. They are versatile and can be boiled, steamed, mashed, stir-fried, etc. In this recipe, I have boiled and baked them.

I used crab as one of the ingredients of the stuffing, but ground beef can be used as well. This makes a great dish for dinner or an appetizer. It definitely makes for a wonderful Father’s Day dish. All dads will be impressed.

Stuffed Turnips

Makes 2 to 4 Servings

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 turnips, with flesh scooped out to look like bowls
- 1 scallion, diced
- 1 cup bread crumbs
- Sea salt and pepper, to taste
- Crab meat
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 or 2 eggs, or 1/4 cup egg whites
- 1 cup orzo/couscous mixture
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley

Cooking TIDBIT

If you can find small turnips, use those instead of the large ones as the flavors are sweeter. But if can find only the large ones, it is important to cook them in salted boiling water for 15 minutes.

DIRECTIONS:



- 1 Cut the roots from the turnips, slicing straight so that they can stand up easily. Wash turnips under cold water, brushing them if muddy; don’t peel. Cook turnips in salted boiling water for 15 minutes.



- 2 In a bowl, place the bread crumbs and the scooped-out flesh, and dice finely. Add parsley, diced scallion, crab meat, extra virgin olive oil, and eggs. Add salt and pepper.



- 3 Mix and pack mixture into the cavities of the turnips. Bake in oven for about 60 minutes at 350 F.



- 4 Place orzo/couscous mixture in pan or pot and add chicken stock and let boil. Once boiling, reduce heat to a simmer until chicken stock evaporates.



- 5 Take a plate and add the orzo/couscous mixture at the center like a bed, then place the baked turnip on top. Garnish with dried parsley.

[A Cook’s Dictionary]



Turnip:

Not only is this root vegetable easy to grow, but it keeps well, too. Because of this, turnips have long been popular in Great Britain and northern Europe. The white-fleshed turnip has a white skin with a purple-tinged top. Small, young turnips have a delicate,

slightly sweet taste. As they age, however, their taste becomes stronger and their texture coarser, sometimes almost woody. Fresh turnips are available year-round, with the peak season from October through February. Choose heavy-for-their-size small turnips, as they are the youngsters and will be more delicately flavored and textured. The roots should be firm and the greens (if attached) bright-colored and fresh-looking. Though turnips can be refrigerated, tightly wrapped, for two weeks, they do best in a cool (55°F), well-ventilated area such as a root cellar. Before using, they should be washed, trimmed and peeled. Turnips may be boiled or steamed, then mashed or pureed. They can also be stir-fried, cubed and tossed with butter, or used raw in salads.

Bibliography: © Barron’s Educational Services, Inc. 1995, based on *The Food Lover’s Companion*, second edition, by Sharon Tyler Herbst.



- 6 Serve and enjoy!

Fun Food Quote:

“True friends are people who think you’re a good egg even though they know you’re slightly cracked.”

– Anonymous