

Recipes... **BELL PEPPER**



NOTES & TIPS: Consider adding diced peppers to bland dishes for a surprising flavor. Ground up peppers can be added to many recipes to avoid the criticism of finicky eaters as well. To avoid overcooking the fruit, cut slices thin before grilling or sautéing – longer cooking may dull the color and reduce the visual impact of the fruit. To freeze, slice and wash. I find they get a bit mushy on freezing so here's my tip – chop before freezing and only use in dishes where they will be cooked such as chili or a casserole, add any other chopped items like onions or herbs, put in a freezer baggies and smash pretty flat. Then you can just reach inside the baggie and break off a piece the size you need, saving the rest for later. I've done this with a hot pepper mix too and it worked great! One large pepper will yield approximately one cup chopped.

ALMOST STUFFED PEPPERS

1 pound ground beef
2 cups water
1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes, undrained
1 large green pepper cut into 1/4-inch slices
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1 1/2 cups uncooked instant rice

In a large skillet, brown beef; drain. Set beef aside and keep warm. In the same skillet, combine water, tomatoes, green pepper, onion and seasonings; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, until vegetables are tender. Stir in rice; cover and remove from the heat. Let stand for 5 minutes. Stir in beef; return to the stove and heat through.

PEPPER RICE & CONFETTI BEEF

1 1/2 cups chicken broth
1 1/2 cups uncooked white rice
1/2 pound beef sirloin, thinly sliced
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1/2 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
1/2 yellow bell pepper, thinly sliced
1/2 green bell pepper, thinly sliced
salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup chopped green onion
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
2 tablespoons honey

In a medium saucepan bring chicken broth to a boil. Add rice and stir. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat, and cook the beef, red bell pepper, yellow bell pepper and green bell pepper until beef is evenly browned. Season with salt and pepper. Remove from heat. Stir Dijon mustard and honey in the beef mixture. Stir green onions into cooked rice. Serve peppers and beef over the rice.

BELL PEPPER – CABBAGE SALAD

1/2 head cabbage, cored
1/2 green bell pepper, diced
2 stalks celery ribs, diced

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3/4 cup cider vinegar
1/2 cup water
3 tsp sweetener

Use the grating attachment of a food processor to grate the cabbage; transfer to a large bowl. Toss the green pepper and celery with the cabbage. Stir the vinegar, sweetener, and water together in a bowl; sprinkle over the cabbage mixture and toss until thoroughly coated.

BELL PEPPERS & PASTA

2 1/4 cups uncooked penne or medium tube pasta
3/4 cup chopped onion
1 tablespoon olive oil
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 cup chopped sweet red pepper
1 cup chopped green pepper
1/4 cup sliced ripe olives
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/4 cup water
1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese

Cook pasta according to package directions. In a nonstick skillet, saute onion in oil for 1-1/2 minutes. Add garlic; cook 30 seconds longer. Add the sweet peppers; cook and stir for 2-3 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Stir in the olives, oregano, salt and cayenne. Add water; cook and stir until mixture comes to a boil. Drain pasta and stir into skillet. Remove from the heat. Stir in cheese. Serve immediately.

BOLOGNESE STUFFED PEPPERS

1/2 cup uncooked white rice
2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
1/8 cup minced carrots
1/8 cup celery
6 bell peppers (any color) stems and seeds removed, cut in half lengthwise
1/2 pound ground beef
1/4 pound pancetta or lightly smoked bacon, diced
1 1/2 cups prepared marinara sauce
1/4 cup red wine
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1/3 cup heavy cream
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). In a saucepan bring water to a boil. Add rice and stir. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes, or until tender and fluffy; set aside. Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Cook and stir carrots and celery until tender. Add ground beef and pancetta, and cook until browned and crumbled; drain off any excess liquid, and return to heat. Add marinara sauce, wine, and red pepper flakes, and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in cream, half of the Parmesan cheese, and rice. Simmer 5 minutes more, or until most liquid has absorbed. Place peppers in a shallow baking dish, and fill with beef mixture. Drizzle with remaining olive oil and top with remaining Parmesan cheese. Bake, uncovered, for 30 minutes in the preheated oven. Serve hot.



BRUSSEL SPROUTS WITH GREEN PEPPERS

1 pound fresh brussel sprouts, halved
1/4 cup chopped green pepper
1/4 cup sliced celery
1/4 cup chopped onion
1 tablespoon butter
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper

Place brussel sprouts in a saucepan with 1 in. of water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 7 minutes. Meanwhile, in a large nonstick skillet, saute the green pepper, celery and onion in butter for 2 minutes. Drain brussel sprouts and add to vegetable mixture. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cook and stir for 3-5 minutes or until sprouts are tender.

GRILLED SWEET PEPPERS

2 pounds sweet baby (small) bell peppers (green, red, orange, purple, and/or yellow)*
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon coarse salt
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese

* If you can find baby bell peppers, use them whole with stem end cut off and seeds removed.

Core, seed, and rinse peppers. Cut each pepper into fourths. In a large resealable plastic bag, place pepper chunks. In a small bowl, combine garlic, salt, olive oil, balsamic vinegar, and pepper; mix well. Pour sauce over pepper chunk. Reseal bag and shake to distribute sauce. Preheat barbecue grill. Remove peppers from sauce. Place peppers, smooth-side down, on hot grill. Cook 6 to 8 minutes (turning occasionally) or until lightly charred on both sides. Remove peppers from grill; either leave in chunks or slice into 1/2-inch-wide strips. Arrange chunks or strips on a platter, alternating colors. Sprinkle with crumbled feta cheese.

THREE PEPPER SALAD

1 red sweet pepper, cored and seeded
1 yellow sweet pepper, cored and seeded
1 orange sweet pepper, cored and seeded
1 small sweet onion (Walla Walla, Vidalia, or Maui), peeled
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley or fresh basil leaves
Coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 tablespoon rice vinegar
1 tablespoon sesame oil
1/4 cup (2 ounces) crumbled feta cheese

Slice sweet peppers into matchstick-size pieces and place in a large bowl. Slice onion into matchstick-size pieces and add to the bowl. Add parsley or basil. Sprinkle with coarse salt and pepper. Add rice vinegar and sesame oil,

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stirring to mix well. Cover and refrigerate approximately 1 hour before serving. To serve, toss salad again and sprinkle with crumbled feta cheese.

BELL PEPPER SOUP

1/4 cup olive oil
4 large bell peppers (2 pounds), stem, ribs and seeds removed and discarded; flesh diced*
1 medium Yukon Gold potato (8 ounces), diced
1 small onion, roughly chopped (to yield 1 cup)
1/2 teaspoon salt; more to taste
Generous pinch red pepper flakes
1 1/2 cups simmering vegetable or chicken stock; more if needed
Sour cream or crème fraiche for garnish
4 small sprigs fresh dillweed

* Red bell peppers will give the brightest color, but yellow or orange ones are just as delicious. I do not recommend using green bell peppers.

In a heavy stockpot, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the peppers, potato, onion, salt, and red pepper flakes. Cook, stirring, for 1 to 2 minutes. Reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender, about 1 hour. Remove from heat.

Transfer to a blender or food processor and puree in batches, or puree thoroughly with a hand immersion blender. Force the pulp through a coarse sieve or a food mill. Transfer to a saucepan and stir in the vegetable or chicken stock, adding a bit more if you like a thinner soup. Taste and adjust the seasonings.

Serve warm or cold, garnished with a dab of sour cream or creme fraiche and a sprig of dill.

RED PEPPER SOUP

2 tablespoons butter
4 red bell peppers, chopped
1 onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
24 fluid ounces chicken broth
1/2 cup heavy cream
1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper

Melt the butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Place the red bell pepper, onion and garlic in the saucepan and saute for 5 to 10 minutes, or until tender. Pour in the chicken broth, stirring well, reduce heat to low and simmer for 30 minutes. Transfer to a blender and puree until smooth. Run the soup through a strainer and return the liquid to the saucepan over medium low heat. Stir in the heavy cream and the ground black pepper and allow to heat through, about 5 to 10 minutes.

EASY ROASTED PEPPERS

6 red bell peppers

Preheat the oven to 500 degrees F (260 degrees C). Cut the peppers into quarters. Remove the seeds and the membranes. Roast the peppers until the skin blisters and turns black. Remove from oven and cover with plastic, or a tea towel, or place in a paper bag until cool. The skins should peel away off of the peppers easily when cooled.