

GOURMET EVERY DAY QUICK KITCHEN

SHRIMP AND PANCETTA ON POLENTA

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 25 MIN START TO FINISH: 25 MIN

Here, shrimp and pancetta join forces with creamy instant polenta in an Italian take on a southern favorite, shrimp and grits.

- ½ cup instant polenta
- ¼ lb pancetta, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ tsp hot red pepper flakes
- 3 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 (14-oz) can diced tomatoes in juice
- 1 lb cleaned large shrimp
- 1 Tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley

► Cook polenta according to package instructions in a heavy medium saucepan until thickened and creamy, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and season with salt, then cover.

► Cook pancetta, garlic, and red pepper flakes in 2 Tbsp oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium heat, stirring, until garlic is pale golden, 2 to 3 minutes. Add tomatoes with their juice and simmer until liquid is reduced to about ¼ cup, 6 to 8 minutes. Add shrimp and cook, stirring occasionally, until shrimp are just cooked through, about 3 minutes. Season with salt.

► Spoon polenta into shallow bowls and top with shrimp mixture. Drizzle with remaining Tbsp oil, season with pepper, and sprinkle with parsley.

SQUASH AND RED PEPPER PILAF

SERVES 6

ACTIVE TIME: 20 MIN START TO FINISH: 50 MIN

A pilaf enriched with butternut squash, red pepper, and toasted pumpkin seeds is wonderful with Spanish white beans and spinach (recipe follows). It would also be terrific with roast chicken.

- ¾ lb butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cut into 1-inch pieces (2 cups)
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into ½-inch pieces (1 cup)
- 1½ cups coarsely chopped onion
- 1 Turkish or ½ California bay leaf
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup long-grain white rice
- 2 cups water
- ¼ cup raw green (hulled) pumpkin seeds (*pepitas*), toasted (see Tips, page 128)

► Cook squash, bell pepper, onion, and bay leaf in oil with 1 tsp salt and ¼ tsp pepper in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until vegetables begin to brown, 8 to 10 minutes.

► Add rice and stir until well coated, then add water and bring to a vigorous boil. Reduce heat to low and cook, tightly covered with lid, until vegetables and rice are tender and liquid is absorbed, about 20 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand, covered, 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper and sprinkle with seeds.

SPANISH WHITE BEANS WITH SPINACH

SERVES 6

ACTIVE TIME: 25 MIN START TO FINISH: 30 MIN

Thanks to a few humble additions—sun-dried tomatoes, sweet smoked paprika, and leafy spinach—these saucy beans have real pizzazz. Best of all, the dish requires little more than a quick sauté and simmer.

- 1 large onion, coarsely chopped (2 cups)
- ½ cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained and chopped
- 6 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ tsp sweet smoked paprika (*pimentón dulce*)
- 2 (19-oz cans) cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup water
- 2 (10-oz) bags spinach, tough stems removed

► Cook onion and sun-dried tomatoes in ¼ cup oil with ½ tsp each of salt and pepper in a 5- to 6-qt pot over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until onion is browned, 6 to 8 minutes. Add garlic and paprika and cook, stirring, 1 minute. ► Stir in beans, water, spinach, and ½ tsp salt and cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until spinach is wilted, about 5 minutes. Season with pepper and drizzle with remaining 2 Tbsp oil.

FOR MORE EVERY DAY RECIPES, SEE PAGE 74.



25
MINUTES