

BUTTERNUT SQUASH POLENTA

SERVES 4 (SIDE DISH)

Active time: 25 min Start to finish: 25 min

- ¾ cup finely chopped onion (1 medium)
- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 (12-oz) package frozen butternut squash purée (sometimes called winter squash; 1½ cups), thawed
- 2½ cups water
- 2 cups whole milk
- 1¼ teaspoons salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ¾ cup instant polenta
- 1 oz finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano (½ cup; see Tips, page 246)

► Cook onion in 3 tablespoons butter in a 10-inch heavy skillet over moderate heat, stirring, until very soft, about 8 minutes. Stir in squash and cook, stirring occasionally, 2 minutes.

► Bring water, milk, salt, and pepper to a boil in a 4-quart heavy pot. Add polenta in a thin stream, whisking. Cook polenta at a bare simmer, stirring with a long-handled whisk and turning down heat as needed to prevent spattering, 5 minutes.

► Stir in squash mixture and cook, stirring, 3 minutes. Remove from heat,

then stir in cheese and remaining 2 tablespoons butter. Serve immediately.

WHOLE-WHEAT LINGUINE WITH CAULIFLOWER, PANCETTA, AND PARMESAN

SERVES 4 (MAIN COURSE)

Active time: 45 min Start to finish: 45 min

If you like cauliflower, you'll love this pasta, with its slightly spicy mix of crisp, savory toppings.

- 1 cup coarse fresh bread crumbs (from 2 slices firm sandwich bread)
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large head cauliflower (2½ lb), cut into 1-inch-wide florets (8 cups)
- ¼ lb sliced pancetta, chopped (1 cup)
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- ¼ teaspoon dried hot red pepper flakes
- 1½ cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- ¾ lb dried whole-wheat linguine (see Kitchen Notebook, page 245)
- ½ oz finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano (¼ cup; see Tips, page 246) plus additional for serving
- ⅓ cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

► Stir together bread crumbs, salt, and 1 tablespoon oil in a small bowl until combined well. Transfer to a 12-inch heavy skillet and cook over moderate heat, stirring, until crisp and golden, 3 to 5 minutes, then return to bowl.

► Heat remaining ¼ cup oil in skillet over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking, then sauté cauliflower, stirring occasionally, until browned well, about 8 minutes.

► Add pancetta and sauté, stirring frequently, until just beginning to crisp, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in garlic and red pepper flakes and sauté, stirring, 1 minute. Add broth, then reduce heat and simmer, partially covered, stirring occasionally, until cauliflower is tender and sauce is slightly reduced, about 7 minutes.

► While sauce simmers, cook linguine in a 6- to 8-quart pot of boiling salted water (see Tips, page 246), uncovered, until al dente, then drain in a colander.

► Stir cheese into sauce and simmer 1 minute. ► Toss pasta with cauliflower mixture and parsley in a large bowl, then sprinkle with bread crumbs. Serve with additional cheese.

For more EVERY DAY recipes, see page 174.

Adding butternut squash purée to polenta turns an easy-to-prepare ingredient into a sensational dish with a lovely, smooth consistency.



25min