

Stuffed Artichokes

Featured recipe for May 2019 in the Delicious Downtown St. Catharines calendar

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4 servings

- 4 large globe artichokes
- Juice from 1 whole lemon
- 4 cups cold water

Stuffing:

- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- ½ cup parmesan cheese, freshly grated
- ¼ cup parsley, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic (or 3 Tbsp. minced garlic)
- ¼ tsp. nutmeg, freshly grated or ground
- 1 cup dry bread crumbs
- ¼ cup cream 35%
- ¼ tsp. salt
- Pinch pepper
- 2 lbs. ground meat of your choice (beef, veal, pork, lamb, chicken, turkey)
- 4 Tbsp. butter
- 2 cups stock (to complement meat chosen, e.g. beef or chicken stock)

Prepare a bowl of acidulated water (lemon juice and cold water) to keep prepared artichokes from discolouring during preparation.

Prepare the artichokes by trimming the leaf tips with a sharp knife. To do this, place the artichoke on its side on a cutting board. Hold the artichoke firmly and cut about a half-inch down from the top straight through all the tips in one shot. Trim the stem off flush with the bottom of the artichoke. Peel the stem and place into bowl of acidulated water. Open the artichoke and scoop out the choke (centre) with a melon baller or spoon (Don't go too deep, you will remove the heart which is the best part). Place artichoke into acidulated water and continue with remaining artichokes in the same manner.

Prepare stuffing by placing all stuffing ingredients into a bowl. Mix very well. Form into meatballs of about 1 Tbsp. each. Make 4 equal piles of meatballs.

With first pile of meatballs, begin stuffing artichokes by gently separating leaves without detaching from base (starting on outer leaves toward centre) and placing a meatball between leaves. Continue filling in a spiral fashion toward centre. Once arrived to centre, fill cavity with a couple of meatballs. If any meatballs remain, press into top of artichoke to create a sort of cap. Gently press artichoke and meat filling with open palms to firm up.

Add about an inch of stock to base of Dutch oven. Place stuffed artichokes in Dutch oven with the peeled stem sitting across top. Dot the top of each artichoke with 1 Tbsp. of butter. Continue with others in same manner. Artichokes will be snug in the pot.

Cover Dutch oven, bring to a boil on stovetop. Lower heat and cook for about 1 hour, until a leaf pulls out very easily. Do not allow pot to dry out, add more stock if necessary.

Instant Pot or pressure cooker:

Fill as instructed for Dutch oven. Seal and bring to pressure for 20 minutes. Quick release steam.

To eat, using a large serving spoon or spatula, carefully lift out artichokes to individual serving bowls. Spoon equal amounts of the cooking liquor between each bowl. Provide bowls for discarding leaves. Pluck a leaf and place between your teeth and pull. The soft exterior pulp of the leaf will remain in your mouth. Discard fibrous leaf remaining in your fingers. You can dip the leaf in the cooking liquid before eating if preferred. Use a fork or keep using your fingers for the delicious meat filling. When you get closer to the centre of the artichoke, the soft inner leaves can be eaten in their entirety without scraping. Once you arrive at the heart, enjoy as this is the best part, and don't forget the stem.