



Roasted Squash and Apple Holiday Feast

My Fall Favorite

Hello, my dear. Come sit. Let's talk about my favorite fall dish. It is roasted squash and apple. The squash gets sweet and soft. The apple gets a little tart and warm. Together, they sing a happy song.

I make this every year. It feels like a hug from the kitchen. The smell fills the whole house. It tells everyone a good meal is coming. Doesn't that smell amazing? That matters. Good smells make a house a home.

A Little Story for You

I first made this for my grandson, Leo. He was about seven. He saw the

squash and said, “Yuck, orange mush!” I just smiled. I let him try a piece right from the pan.

His eyes got big. “This is good, Nana!” He ate three pieces. I still laugh at that. Now he asks for it every visit. It just shows you. Sometimes the “yuck” things are the best.

Why We Roast Them

You might wonder why we roast. Why not boil? Roasting is magic. The hot oven pulls out the natural sugars. It makes the edges caramelize. That means they get a little brown and sweet.

This brings out the true flavor. Boiling can wash flavor away. Roasting keeps it all in. *Fun fact: This browning has a fancy name. Chefs call it the Maillard reaction.* But we just call it delicious.

The Zippy Little Dressing

Now, the dish is sweet and soft. It needs a little zip. That is the vinaigrette’s job. It has vinegar and a tiny pinch of red pepper. This is important. The little bit of sharpness wakes up your mouth.

It balances all the sweetness. Without it, the dish might feel too heavy. The parsley adds a fresh, green note. Do you have a favorite herb you like to cook with? I’d love to hear it.

See also Creamy Slow Cooker Holiday Potatoes

Putting It All Together

Here is the trick. Roast the squash first. It needs more time. Then add the apple wedges. They cook fast. This way, nothing gets mushy.

Everything is just right.

Arrange it on a nice platter. Drizzle that zippy dressing over the top. The colors are beautiful. Orange squash, red apple skin, green parsley. It is a feast for your eyes first. What is your favorite colorful food to make?

More Than Just Food

This dish matters to me. It is about using what the season gives you. Fall gives us squash and apples. It is a gift. Cooking them together feels right and thankful.

It also matters because it is simple. You do not need fancy skills. Just good ingredients and a hot oven. That is real cooking. It brings people to the table. Will you be making this for a special dinner, or just a cozy night in?

Ingredients:

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Red wine vinegar	3 tablespoons	For the vinaigrette
Sugar	1 tablespoon	For the vinaigrette
Table salt	$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon	For the vinaigrette
Shallot, minced	3 tablespoons	For the vinaigrette
Fresh parsley, chopped	2 tablespoons	For the vinaigrette
Extra-virgin olive oil	2 tablespoons	For the vinaigrette
Red pepper flakes	$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon	For the vinaigrette
Butternut squash	1 (2 $\frac{1}{4}$ - to 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ -pound)	Peeled, seeded, and sliced
Extra-virgin olive oil	3 tablespoons, divided	For roasting

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Table salt	1 teaspoon	For roasting
Apple (Gala, Fuji, or Braeburn)	1	Unpeeled, cored, cut into ½-inch wedges



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Instructions

Step 1: First, make your dressing. Stir the vinegar, sugar, and salt in a little bowl. Keep stirring until the sugar disappears. Then mix in the shallot, parsley, oil, and pepper flakes. Set it aside for later. Doesn't that smell amazing already?

Step 2: Now, heat your oven to 450 degrees. Peel your squash and cut off the ends. Scoop out the seeds, just like cleaning a pumpkin. Slice it into thick, moon-shaped pieces. I still laugh at how my grandson calls them "orange smiles."

See also [Spiced Falafel Holiday Harvest Bowls](#)

Step 3: Toss the squash with two tablespoons of oil and the salt. Lay the pieces flat on a baking sheet. Roast them for about 15 minutes. (Always lay them flat side down for the best browning.) Can you guess why we don't flip them yet? Share below!

Step 4: Toss your apple wedges with the last bit of oil. Pull the sheet from the oven. Tuck the apples between the squash pieces. Do not flip anything! Roast for 8 more minutes. The kitchen will smell like a holiday.

Step 5: Carefully move everything to a pretty platter. Drizzle your waiting vinaigrette all over the top. Serve it warm or let it sit. The flavors get friendlier as they cool. It's a simple, happy feast.

Creative Twists

Swap the apple for a ripe pear. It gets wonderfully sweet and soft.
Add a handful of toasted pecans right before serving. The crunch is so nice.

Use maple syrup instead of sugar in the vinaigrette. It tastes like autumn in a spoon. Which one would you try first? Comment below!

Serving & Pairing Ideas

This dish loves company. Pile it next to a simple roast chicken. Or spoon it over fluffy couscous. For a garnish, a little extra parsley is perfect. To drink, a fizzy apple cider is lovely. Grown-ups might enjoy a glass of chilled Riesling wine. Both are sweet and friendly. Which would you choose tonight?



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Keeping Your Feast Fresh

This dish keeps beautifully in the fridge. Just let it cool first. Store it in a covered container for up to three days. I do not recommend freezing it. The squash gets too mushy.

See also Rum Glazed Molasses Spice Cookies

You can roast the squash ahead of time. Just make the vinaigrette fresh. Reheat the squash gently in a warm oven. This keeps the apples from turning to mush. I once reheated it in the microwave. It was still tasty, but not as pretty.

Batch cooking saves your holiday energy. You can focus on your guests later. It makes a busy kitchen feel calm. **Have you ever tried storing it this way? Share below!**

Simple Fixes for Common Hiccups

Is your squash not browning? Your oven rack is too high. Move it to the lowest position. The heat needs to hit the pan directly. I remember when my squash stayed pale. The bottom rack fixed everything.

Are the apples too soft? You might have cut them too thin. Use thick, half-inch wedges. Add them halfway through roasting. This gives them perfect texture. Getting the texture right matters. It makes every bite interesting.

Is the vinaigrette too sharp? The sugar needs to fully dissolve. Stir it well with the vinegar and salt. This balances all the flavors beautifully. Understanding these little steps builds confidence. **Which of these**

problems have you run into before?

Your Quick Questions, Answered

Q: Is this recipe gluten-free?

A: Yes, all the ingredients are naturally gluten-free.

Q: Can I make it ahead?

A: Roast the squash a day early. Make the vinaigrette fresh on the day.

Q: I don't have shallots. What can I use?

A: A few tablespoons of very finely chopped red onion works fine.

Q: Can I double this for a crowd?

A: Absolutely! Use two baking sheets. Switch their oven positions halfway through.

Q: Any optional add-ins?

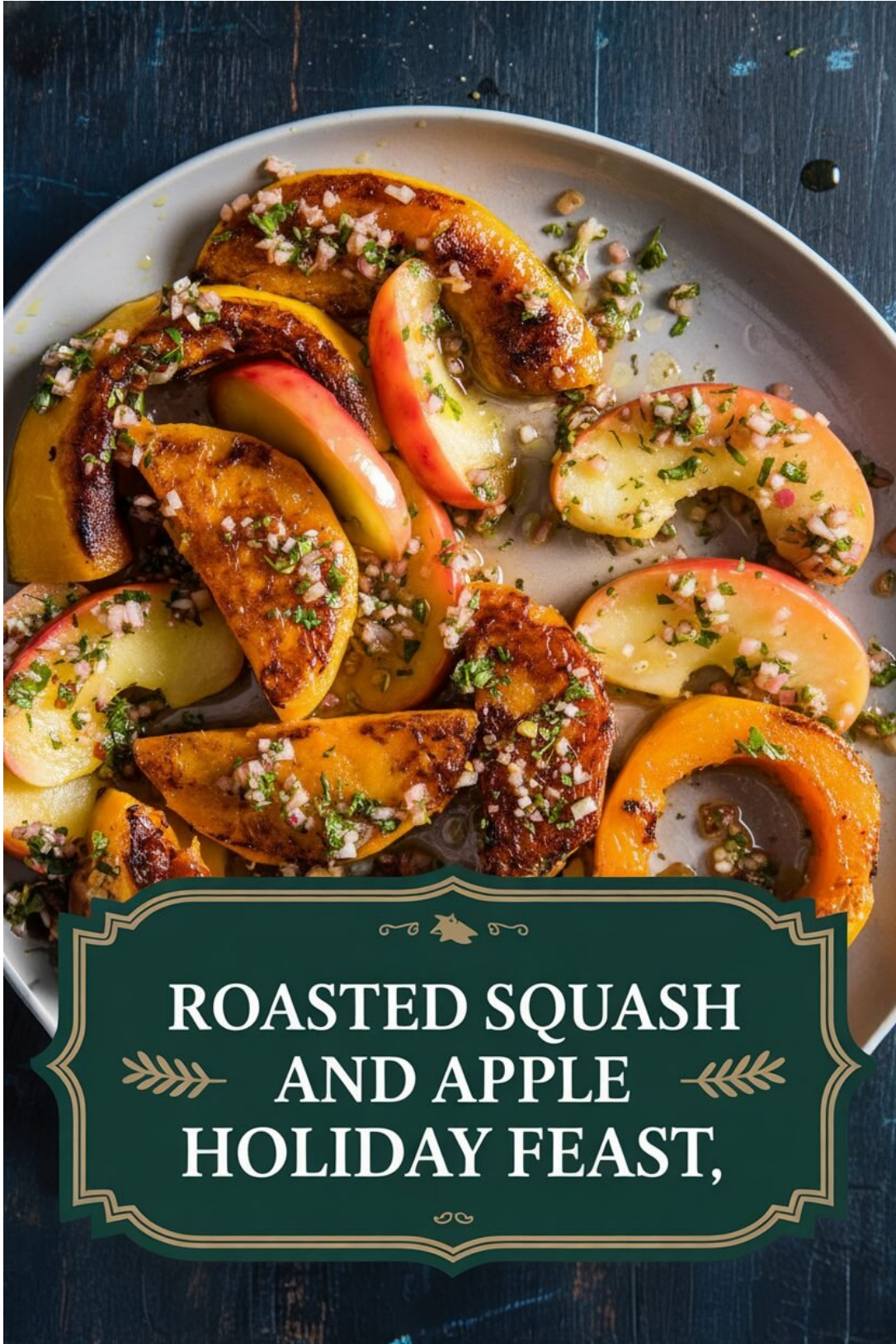
A: A sprinkle of toasted pecans adds a lovely crunch. *Fun fact: Butternut squash is actually a fruit!* **Which tip will you try first?**

From My Kitchen to Yours

I hope this recipe brings warmth to your table. The mix of sweet squash and tart apple is magic. It always reminds me of crisp autumn afternoons. I would love to hear about your cooking adventure.

Tell me all about it in the comments below. **Have you tried this recipe?** Sharing our stories makes the food taste even better. Happy cooking!

—Elowen Thorn.





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