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How to Make Homemade Gourmet Grilled Vegetables Easily - From Your Surplus Squash!

Grilled Vegetables with Feta

(Zucchini, Yellow Squash, Crookneck, Pattypan, Straightneck, White Scallop, etc.)



If you're like most people, you plant a few zucchini, yellow squash (crookneck or straightneck) and a few peppers... and then you have squash coming out your ears. The first week you eat it. Then you give it away. Then people run when they see you coming with more squash.

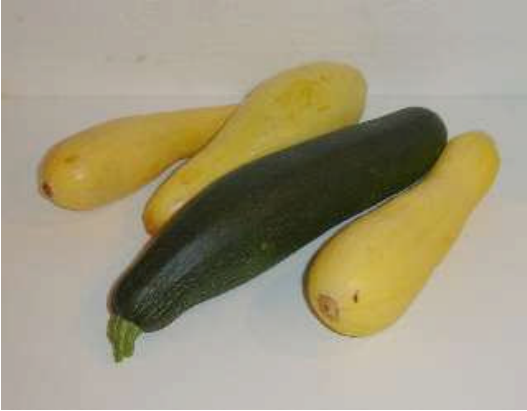
Here's a really simple recipe to turn that excess squash into a gourmet side dish that you can server to the family or a dinner party. Snobs, food-trendies and crunchy-granola types will all like this, as grilled vegetables, particularly squash, is the latest trend at gourmet restaurants, AND it is healthy, low-fat, low calorie, natural, can be made from organic, sustainably-raised veggies and is also VERY tasty.

Here's how to do it, complete instructions in easy steps and completely illustrated. The squash will taste MUCH better than anything you've ever had from a store.

Ingredients and Equipment

- Fresh summer squash - 3 or 4 small yellow squash and 2 small green zucchini, but you can use make larger batches. You want young squash! When it gets big to the point where seeds are forming, summer squash become tough and are more suitable for making zucchini bread or use in hand-to-hand combat. I figure one medium sized squash per serving (it does cook down)
- 2 or 3 large onions
- 2 or 3 fresh red, yellow or orange Peppers (sweet, Bell-type work best)
- Extra-Virgin olive oil (about 1/4 cup)
- 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
- Herbs:
 - 2 tablespoons finely diced dried oregano and
 - 2 tablespoons of "Herbs d'Provence" - if you haven't got this, ground rosemary and thyme will do.
- Outdoor grill or barbecue - OR - indoor oven (electric or gas - with a broiler element)
- 1 sharp knife
- If you want to freeze it, you'll also need vacuum food sealer or "ziploc" type freezer bags (the freezer bag version is heavier and protects better against freezer burn.

Instructions



Step 1 - Get the veggies!

Start with fresh squash - as fresh and young as you can get. If there is a delay between harvesting and freezing, put it in the refrigerator or put ice on it. Harvest before the seeds become mature and when color is still uniformly dark

Step 2 - Wash the squash!

I'm sure you can figure out how to rinse the squash in plain cold or lukewarm water



Step 3 - Slice the squash and onions

Just take a sharp knife and cut off both ends - blossom and stem end (cut about 1/4 of an inch, or half the width of an average woman's little finger)

Slice into 1/8th inch thick slices.

Prepare quickly, (if you leave it sit cut for more than a half hour, it will start to discolor). Do enough squash for one blanching at a time.



Step 4 - Prepare the peppers

Similarly, you'll need to remove the stem end of the peppers, and wash out the seeds from the inside (seed cavity) of the peppers, then slice into 1/8th inch thick slices



Step 5 - Marinate in olive oil and herbs

Put the slices squash, peppers and onions in a bowl. Add the 1/4 cup of extra virgin olive oil and the herbs (2 tablespoons of each oregano and herbs d'Provence). Mix well and let stand for at least 10 to 15 minutes. 30 minutes is perfect.

Step 6 - Grill the veggies - 10 minutes each side

use one of those stainless steel trays or baskets, to keep the veggies from sliding through the grill. Given them about 5 to 15 minutes per side - it really depends on how hot your grill is. At 400F, it's about 10 minutes per side, until you see some golden brown appearing on the veggies.



Step 7 - Remove from the grill and mix with feta

Just pop the grilled vegetables back into the bowl they were in (it's not meat, so there's no bacteria to worry about) and mix well with the 1/4 cup crumbled finely feta cheese. Do this while the veggies are still hot, so the cheese will melt a bit!

Step 8 - Serve - or Freeze!

serve them to your guests, or freeze it for the winter.

I love the FoodSavers ([see this page for more information](#)) with their vacuum sealing. I am not paid by them, but these things really work. If you don't have one, ziploc bags work, too, but it is hard to get



s much air out of the bags remove
he air to prevent drying and
reezer burn

ote:

f the squash is very wet, after
raining it, just put it in the food
over bag and freeze it (unsealed
nd upright) in your freezer. THEN,
veral hours later or the next day,
hen it is frozen, you can seal it
ith no mess

Step 9 - Done!

Pop them into the freezer, on the quick freeze
shelf, if you have one!



Ziploc bag



Foodsaver vac bag

Tips:

- Harvest the squash at its peak maturity (firm, not limp or old)
- Process promptly after harvesting, or keep cooled in the fridge or with ice until then.
- If the squash is watery when thawed, discard the liquid before using.
- An alternative method is to cook the squash first - using your favorite recipe for a zucchini casserole, or sautéed squash, etc., and then simply freeze the cooked squash! Of course, it does take up more room in your freezer.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How long can they be frozen?

It depends upon how cold is your freezer and how you packed them. Colder (deep freezes) are better than frost free compartments, which actually cycle above freezing (that's how they melt the ice). Vacuum packing results in longer storage capability, too. Thicker bags also help prevent freezer burn.

In general, up to 9 months in a ziploc bag in an ordinary freezer, and 14 months in a deep freeze in a vacuum packed bag. After that, they beans won't make you sick; they just won't taste as good.