

## CABBAGE ROLLS

It is fall, cabbage season, chilly evenings and I needed something to bring to a friend's for dinner to sit alongside a smorgasbord of grilled sausages and a big pan of mac & cheese. So, I decided on vegetable stuffed cabbage rolls. After surfing for a bit and reading tons of recipe suggestions I decided on a brown rice and lentil stuffing. Of course you can stuff these beautiful big green cabbage leaves with just about anything. To make them a main course, choose a meat stuffing.

- 1 cup uncooked brown rice, cooked according to package directions
- 1 cup uncooked lentils, cooked according to package directions
- 1 8oz package of mushrooms, cut into large dice
- 1 medium sized carrot, diced
- 1 medium white onion, diced
- 1 stalk of celery, diced
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ½ t thyme
- Pinch red pepper flakes
- Salt to taste
- 1 head of cabbage
- 2 cups of your favorite tomato sauce

Get the rice and lentils cooking. While they are cooking sauté the carrot, onion, celery, garlic, thyme, red pepper flakes and salt in a medium sized sauté pan over medium heat. Cook for about 8-10 minutes, in a splash of olive oil, to soften vegetables but do not brown. Add the mushrooms and continue cooking and stirring a bit until all their water has cooked off. Add the cooked rice and the cooked & drained lentils. Stir together thoroughly. Taste and adjust seasoning if necessary.

Meanwhile carefully remove leaves from cabbage one by one. I got 16 really nice good sized leaves from one head of cabbage. Heat a large wide pan with about 2 " of water, bring to boil. On each leaf, thin out the thickest portion of the center vein so that it will be about ½ the original thickness. Blanch each leaf in the boiling water for about 30 seconds, until tender and slightly wilted. Have ready a cookie sheet lined with a cotton towel- I used 2 such trays. Lay the cabbage leaves on the tray to drain.

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Have ready a 9x13 pan with a thin layer of tomato sauce covering the bottom of the pan. Working with one cabbage leaf at the time place about ½ - ¾ cup of filling near the bottom end of each leaf, the end where the thick vein is. Gently fold in the sides of the leaf and then roll up jelly roll style. Place seam side down in the 9x13 pan. Continue filling leaves until you run out of space in your pan. I made 2 rows of 8 rolls in my pan. Cover cabbage rolls with additional tomato sauce. Cover pan with foil and place in oven, bake for about 45 min to 1 hour to thoroughly heat thru.

Cabbage rolls may be made in the morning, covered with foil and refrigerated until needed. Heat as directed. above.