

Bell Peppers

Packed with Vitamin C



Roasted Peppers

6 bell peppers, assorted colors

Your favorite vinaigrette

Char peppers over a gas burner or under a broiler, turning until all sides are blackened. Transfer to a resealable plastic bag and cool about 10 minutes. Peel, seed, then slice peppers into strips. Transfer peppers to a bowl and drizzle with your favorite vinaigrette. Let stand at room temperature for at least 30 minutes or refrigerate overnight. Bring peppers to room temperature before serving. Makes 6 servings.

Four Pepper Pasta

1 each: medium red and green bell peppers, cut into 1-inch chunks
½ cup sliced red onion
2 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon chopped garlic

2 teaspoon chopped jalapeno peppers
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
Dash salt
2 cups cooked pasta

Set the oven to broil. Place the red and green bell peppers and the red onions in a small bowl. Add the oil and toss until each piece is lightly coated with the oil. Arrange the peppers and onion on the broiler pan. Broil until thoroughly roasted. Spray a medium skillet with nonstick cooking spray and heat over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and jalapeno peppers and onions. Sprinkle cayenne pepper and salt over the vegetables and heat thoroughly, about 20 minutes. Add the cooked pasta to the skillet and toss with the vegetables until well mixed. Makes 2 servings.

Stuffed Bell Peppers

4 large green bell peppers
Cooking spray
½ cup chopped onion
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 jalapeno pepper, minced
½ cup uncooked jasmine rice

1 cup fat-free, less-sodium chicken broth
2 cup no-salt-added tomato sauce, divided
½ cup grated fresh Parmesan cheese, divided
¼ tsp. black pepper
1 large egg, lightly beaten
1 pound ground turkey breast

Preheat oven to 400°F. Cut bell peppers in half lengthwise; discard seeds and membranes, leaving the stems intact. Place on a foil-lined jellyroll pan, cut sides up. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Coat with cooking spray. Add onion, garlic and pepper to pan; sauté 5 minutes or until onion is lightly browned. Add rice, and cook 2 minutes, stirring frequently. Add broth; bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 10 minutes. Remove from heat; cool completely. Combine rice mixture, 1 cup tomato sauce, ¼ cup cheese and remaining ingredients in a bowl stirring until blended. Spoon about ½ cup meat mixture into each pepper half. Spoon remaining 1 cup tomato sauce evenly over peppers. Cover and bake at 400°F for 45 minutes. Uncover and sprinkle with remaining ¼ cup cheese; bake 3 minutes or until cheese melts.

Red Pepper Rolls

4 red bell peppers
1 ripe, fresh California peach, diced
6 ounces goat cheese
10 fresh basil leaves, julienne cut

Coarse salt
Fresh ground black pepper
2 tbsp. olive oil
24 toothpicks, optional

Fire roast red peppers over an open flame until skin blisters. Remove skin. Cut peppers in half and remove seeds and stem. Cut each half into three long strips. In a bowl, combine peach, goat cheese and basil; mix until combined. To assemble, place peppers flat, skin-side down. Put ½ teaspoon of peach mixture on one end of each pepper slice. Roll up pepper, peach mixture will be in the center. Brush the rolled peppers with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Slide a toothpick through each rolled pepper, if desired. Makes 24 pepper rolls.

Grilled Peppers with Sausage and Grits

2 medium-size red bell peppers, cut into quarters
2 medium-size sweet onions, cut into quarters
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
½ teaspoon salt
1 (19-ounce) package garlic pork sausage links

2 (14.5-ounce) can low-sodium chicken broth
1 cup uncooked quick-cooking grits
2 tablespoons butter
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/3 cup chopped fresh basil
½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Preheat grill or oven to 350-400°F. Toss peppers and onions with olive oil, thyme and salt. Grill pepper mixture and sausage at the same time, covered with grill lid. Grill pepper mixture, turning occasionally, 8-10 minutes or until wilted. Grill sausage 5 minutes on each side or until done. Bring chicken broth and water to a boil in a 3-quart saucepan; slowly stir in grits, reduce heat and simmer 12 minutes or until thickened and creamy, stirring often. Remove from heat; stir in butter and next 3 ingredients. Coarsely chop peppers and onions, and slice sausage into 1-inch pieces. Serve sausage and pepper mixture over hot grits. Makes 4-6 servings.

Caribbean Rice Salad

1 cup brown rice
1 (15 oz.) black beans, rinsed and drained
2 cups coarsely shredded fresh spinach
1 medium red bell pepper, coarsely chopped
1 medium mango, peeled, seeded, and chopped
¼ cup thinly sliced green onions

Honey Lime Vinaigrette

¼ cup honey
¼ cup apple cider vinegar
⅛ cup lime juice
½ cup canola oil
2 T. finely diced onion
Pinch of Salt

Cook rice according to package directions; set aside. In a large bowl stir together beans, spinach, pepper, mango and onions. Whisk together remaining ingredients. Mix together rice and bean-vegetable mixture and drizzle with some of vinaigrette. Toss to coat. Serve immediately or cover and chill up to 24 hours. Makes 10 (2/3 cup) servings.

How to Freeze Peppers

Preparation—Select crisp, tender, bright-color pods. Wash, cut out stems, cut in half and remove seeds. These can also be sliced into rings or sticks.

Heated—Good for use in cooking. Water blanch halves 3 minutes, strips for 3 minutes; slices or strips for 2 minutes. Cool promptly, drain and package, leaving ½" headspace. Seal and freeze.

Unheated—Good for use in uncooked foods because they have a crisper texture. Package, leaving no headspace. Seal and freeze.