**What’s for Dinner: Stuffed Green Peppers**

INSERT LEAD PHOTO

The Occasion: No special occasion required. This is not a fancy dish by any means, but it’s warm, hearty, easy, and satisfying. Perfect for wintertime, weeknight, family meals. I made a big pan-full on Sunday night and we enjoyed leftovers for several days.

Why This Works: Adaptability. Do you prefer to use red bell peppers instead of green? Okay. Ground turkey instead of beef? Fine. Brown rice or white? Whichever you have on hand. Veggies, sauce, cheese? Whatever you like. As the platitude says: It’s all good.

Cooking Tip: You probably know this already but it was new to me (thank you, Good Housekeeping Cookbook from **XXXX DATE**): Parboil the pepper shells first before filling and baking them. This ensures they’ll get tender without overcooking the other ingredients once the dish is in the oven.

INSERT PLAYLIST SONG

*Click on the photos to enlarge them and read the captions.*

INSERT GALLERY

The Verdict: I love this so much, probably because it reminds me of childhood meals. It’s a basic no-frills meal that makes me very, very happy. I hope you like it too.

INSERT PRINTABLE RECIPE

**Stuffed Green Peppers**

*Recipe source: Ann Johnson*

**INGREDIENTS:**

4 medium green bell peppers

1 tablespoon canola oil (optional)

1 package ground beef or ground turkey (anywhere from 12-16 oz)

1 large onion, cut into small dice

1 teaspoon minced garlic

1 ½ cups fresh or frozen vegetables, whatever kind you like – I used frozen corn and peas, plus fresh tomatoes cut into small dice

1 cup cooked rice

1 tablespoon mustard (optional)

1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce (optional)

Salt and pepper to taste

2 cups tomato sauce, homemade or store-bought, separated

1 cup shredded cheese, whatever kind you like – I used sharp cheddar, but mozzarella, Monterey jack, or a blend would be good too

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 400˚ F. Spray a 9X13 pan with cooking spray or use a paper towel to give it a quick wipe with canola oil. Set it aside.

Slice the peppers in half vertically. Remove the seeds and membranes.

Place about an inch of water in a large covered pot and bring it to a boil over medium-high heat. Add pepper halves, cover the pan, reduce heat to medium-low, and cook for about 5 minutes. The goal is to steam the peppers until tender but not mushy. Check their progress part-way through and shorten the cook time as necessary. Remove peppers from the pan and set them aside.

Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. If you are using a low-fat protein such as turkey or low-fat beef add 1 tablespoon of oil to the skillet. (If you are using ground beef with a higher fat content you can skip the oil.) Reduce the heat to medium, add the ground meat and cook until done (no pink showing). Remove the ground meat from the pan and drain it on paper towels.

Pour off all but 1 tablespoon of the meat drippings. Heat the drippings over medium heat. Add the onions and sauté until tender, stirring occasionally, about 3 minutes.

Add the garlic and stir, approximately 30 seconds.

Add the other vegetables, mix and cook together until softened, about 3 minutes. Remove from the heat.

In a large bowl mix together the ground beef/turkey, cooked rice, cooked vegetables, and optional flavorings if using (mustard, Worcestershire sauce). Add ½ cup tomato sauce. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Place the peppers into the prepared pan and spoon the beef mixture into the peppers. Spoon the remaining tomato sauce over the peppers. Sprinkle the shredded cheese on top of the peppers.

Cook uncovered in the oven until the cheese is melted and beef mixture is warmed through, approximately 15-20 minutes.

Serve peppers with a little extra tomato sauce if desired.

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What are some of your favorite meals from childhood that you still make today? Please share in the comments.