

Ann Middleton

Written by Sean Green
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Age: 66

Hometown: Rayville, LA

Hobbies: My pets - 2 dogs and 2 cats. And I love to read.

How long have you been cooking? About 45 years

How did you start cooking? I really didn't begin to cook until I married. Then it became a necessity.

What's your favorite dish to cook? Anything vegetarian. I occasionally eat seafood and then I enjoy making Crawfish Etouffee'.

What do people say about your cooking? When we celebrate a special occasion at the library where I work, comments are generally favorable and my dishes are usually consumed completely. My family also have favorite dishes that they request when we get together.

What's your philosophy when it comes to cooking? Fresh is always best whether it's fruits, vegetables or herbs and spices.

Anything you want to say to the public? Being vegetarian is healthy and delicious.

Veggie Chili

Ingredients:

5 ½ cups water

¾ cup bulgur wheat (the texture is very much like ground beef, but no fat and cholesterol)

2 tsp. olive oil

1 cup each chopped onion and red pepper

2 Tbsp. salt-free chili powder

2 tsp. each minced garlic and ground cumin

1 can (28 oz.) crushed tomatoes

1 can (15 oz.) pure pumpkin (makes the chili smooth and creamy and adds lots of vitamin A)

1 medium zucchini, diced

1 cup frozen corn

1 can (15.5 oz.) black beans, rinsed

½ cup chopped cilantro

Directions:

Put 3 cups of the water and the bulgur in a medium microwave-safe bowl. Cover and microwave on high until bulgur is tender, about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat oil in a large nonstick skillet. Add onion and pepper, saute' 5 minutes. Add chili powder, garlic and cumin; saute' until fragrant.

Add remaining 2 1/2 cups water, the tomatoes, pumpkin, zucchini and corn; bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat and simmer 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are tender.

Stir in beans and bulgur, heat through. Remove from heat and stir in cilantro.

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