



## **Recipe: Spaghetti Squash**

Spaghetti squash, an oblong football-kind-of-looking squash, is named for the spaghetti-like strands that its cooked flesh produces. Crisp-tender in texture and mild with a squash-like flavor, this vegetable is a delicious ingredient that can be incorporated into just about any dish – from salads, to sides, to vegetarian main entrees. Because of its mild flavor, spaghetti squash goes well with just about any sauce or dressing you can think of – everything from store-bought jars of marinara, to brown butter, to pesto, to sautéed vegetables and fresh herbs.

Choose a squash that is heavy for its size with a hard rind. I find that many squashes arrive to market still not quite ripe, so you may do well to let yours sit on the counter a few days longer. As with most squash, the rind is thick and hard to cut through. A cleaver or large sharp knife is your best bet, but do take care while working to cut the squash open. Spaghetti squash can be held for a few weeks in a cool, dry place.

While there are recipes for quick steaming the spaghetti squash, I prefer oven roasting for a far superior texture and a more developed, concentrated flavor. To steam, cut the squash in half, scoop out the seeds, and place the squash cut side down in a large heavy pot, filled with about 1/2-inch of water. They do not have to lie perfectly flat, and I prefer that they don't to prevent scorching of the flesh. Cover the pot and bring the water to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer until the squash is cooked through, about 20 minutes. Carefully remove the squash from the pot to a sheet pan or platter and cool just enough to handle. Using a fork, rake the flesh from side to side to release the steamed strands. Use the spaghetti squash strands in your favorite recipe.

## **Oven Roasted Spaghetti Squash**

### **Ingredients**

1 spaghetti squash, choose a small but heavy for its size squash (smaller squash tend to be more flavorful)

2-3 tablespoons olive oil

### **Preparation**

Put the oven rack to the lower third position and preheat oven to 400° F. Line a rimmed sheet pan with aluminum foil.



Using a sharp knife carefully cut the squash open lengthwise. Scrape out the seeds, and then rub the flesh of the squash generously with olive oil. Place cut sides down on the prepared pan and bake for 45 minutes. Carefully turn the squash so the flesh/cut-side is up and roast until tender, about 15 minutes more. Remove from the oven and cool just enough to handle.

Using a fork, scrape the flesh of the squash from the skin, and separate the spaghetti-like strands. Remove the strands to a warmed dish and reserve until ready to use.

Toss the squash in a pan with sautéed vegetables and herbs, or top with your favorite sauce or dressing. The squash is cooked when it comes out of the oven; you can re-heat or sauté on the stove top, according to how you plan to serve the squash.

***Microwave method for faster roasting:*** If you are in a hurry, split and seed the squash. Place cut-side up on a microwave-safe dish. Microwave on high about 8 minutes, then finish in the oven by rubbing with a bit of olive oil and roasting (cut side up) in a 400° F oven for 20 minutes, or until the squash is tender.