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## **QUINOA-STUFFED SQUASH**

*Cooking Light – November 2011*

**Serves 4**

- 4 (1-pound) golden nugget squashes
- Cooking spray
- 2 (4-ounce) links hot turkey Italian sausage, casings removed
- ½ cup finely chopped carrot
- ½ cup finely chopped onion
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ cup water
- 2 cups cooked quinoa
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- ½ teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ¾ cup (3 ounces) shredded 2% reduced-fat Monterey Jack cheese, divided

- Cut the top quarter off each squash; reserve tops. Discard seeds. Arrange squashes, cut sides down, in 2 (11 x 7-inch) baking dishes. Fill each dish with 1 inch of water; microwave 1 dish at HIGH for 15 minutes. Remove dish; repeat with remaining dish. Cool.
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Coat pan with cooking spray. Add sausage; sauté 5 minutes or until browned, stirring to crumble. Remove sausage with a slotted spoon. Add carrot, onion, and garlic to drippings in pan; sauté 2 minutes, stirring frequently. Stir in ½ cup water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium; cover and cook 8 minutes or until carrot is tender.
- Combine squash, carrot mixture, quinoa, parsley, thyme, salt, and pepper; stir in ½ cup cheese. Stuff about 1 cup quinoa mixture in each squash, and top each serving with 1 tablespoon cheese.
- Arrange stuffed squashes in a broiler-safe baking dish, and place tops in dish. Bake at 350 for 20 minutes or until thoroughly heated. Remove from oven.
- Preheat broiler to high.
- Broil squashes 4 minutes or until cheese is golden.