



## Dumplings

A fantastic finger food that you can stuff with almost anything! You can alter the medicinal and nutrient value of the dumplings depending on what you pack the dumplings with. Get your children involved in making them (that's half the fun) and make more than you need. You can keep them in your fridge (they'll stay for four to five days) and quickly cook them up when you need them.

### *Ingredients*

½ medium butternut squash, kabocha squash or small pumpkin; or 1 sweet potato  
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil  
1 tablespoon sesame oil for filling plus more for pan-frying dumplings  
1 bunch scallions, edges trimmed and chopped into thin rounds  
1-2 leeks, white parts washed and cut into thin half-moons  
1 clove garlic, minced  
1-inch piece of ginger, peeled and minced  
¼ pound shitake mushrooms, tough part of stem removed and cut into small, thin pieces  
½ bunch swiss chard, washed, tough parts of stems removed, and chopped very small  
shoyu  
sea salt  
40-50 dumpling wrappers (buy at Asian stores or some supermarkets)

### *Procedure*

1. Bake the squash or sweet potato in the oven at 350 degree until you can easily put a fork through it. When it's cool enough to handle, remove the seeds, scoop the flesh from the skin with spoon and mash until it's fairly smooth.
2. In a large skillet, heat the oils and add the scallions and leek. Sauté for three to five minutes, until they become soft.
3. Add garlic and ginger and stir around for just another 30 seconds.
4. Add mushrooms, a small splash of shoyu and a little bit of water. Cook for another 3 minutes.
5. Add chard. If the mixture is too dry and sticking to the pan, add a bit more shoyu and/or water.
6. Cook on gentle heat until all the ingredients are soft and all the liquid is absorbed, about another 7-10 minutes.
7. Add mashed squash or sweet potato and cook just enough to heat through and mix together well.
8. Taste, adjusting salt or shoyu as needed, and take off heat. *NOTE: It is best at this point to let the mixture sit for about 30 minutes so it can cool a bit. It should also give off some liquid—strain this off and add it to your dipping sauce!*
9. To fill dumplings: put one wrapper in front of you and put a small amount of filling right in the middle. Wet your finger very, very lightly in a bowl of water and run it around the edge of half the wrapper. Then turn the dry end over unto the wet and pinch firmly all around. Experiment with different dumpling looks by pinching in different ways.
10. To cook dumplings: add about 1 teaspoon sesame oil to a non-stick pan and place dumplings carefully in pan. After about three minutes, when the down side is crispy and brown, add a splash of water to the pan and *very quickly* cover with a tight lid. It will sizzle dramatically when the water hits the pan so be careful! They will steam fully in just two minutes. Cook them in batches, taking care not to crowd the pan. (Alternately, cook by steaming them in a bamboo or steamer basket.)
11. Serve with dipping sauce (recipe attached)!

