



## **Layered Peppered Pumpkin Polenta**

*Something strange is happening...*

*How did that pumpkin get into our Polenta?*

### **Easy Pumpkin Polenta:**

6 cups water

2 Tablespoons olive oil

1-1/2 teaspoon salt

1-1/2 cups medium yellow cornmeal

1 cup mashed or canned pumpkin

1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

Place water, oil, and salt in a heavy large saucepan. Cook over medium heat. Slowly pour the cornmeal into water while constantly whisking until smooth. Bring mixture to a boil; stir frequently until it starts to thicken, about 8 to 10 minutes. Turn heat to low/simmer; partially cover saucepan; stir frequently scraping over the sides, bottom, and corners of pot. Continue cooking on low/simmer for about 25 minutes or cornmeal is tender. Cook to the thickness of a soft or thick porridge.

Combine pumpkin and nutmeg; swirl into cooked polenta. Remove from the heat. Serve immediately with butter or grated Parmesan cheese or serve in 8 cup serving dish. Serves 6

### **Layered Peppered Pumpkin Polenta**

6 cups cooked easy pumpkin polenta, warmed. divided  
2 cups shredded cheddar pepper cheese or jack cheese. divided  
4 Tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese, divided  
2 Tablespoons unsalted butter

Preheat oven to 400-degree F. Grease 8 cup baking dish.

Spread two layers of pumpkin polenta: For each layer, spread 2-1/4 cups hot cooked pumpkin polenta evenly into prepared baking dish and sprinkle it with 1 cup shredded pepper cheese and 1 Tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese. Repeat process for second layer. Top spread remaining pumpkin polenta over the top. Dot 2 Tablespoons butter in tiny pieces over the top; sprinkle with 2 Tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese.

Place on baking sheet for easier handling. Bake in preheated 400-degree oven for about 40 to 50 minutes or golden brown and sizzling. Serve hot as a spoon-up dish or let cool to cut into wedges. Serves: about 8

**Cook's Note:** Polenta will thicken as it cools. If you want to make it thinner, warm it up and add some additional water. Stir until desired porridge consistency.

**About the Recipe:** Celebrate the season by making some peppered pumpkin polenta. Pumpkin's golden color and flavor has a touch of spicy peppers. Serve it in a simple style or layer it for an elegant holiday side dish.