

Baked Spaghetti Squash

1 medium spaghetti squash (2 ¼ lb)
12 oz bulk Italian sausage
1 ½ cups sliced fresh mushrooms
1 medium green or red sweet pepper, chopped
1/3 cup finely chopped onion
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 4 ¼ oz can chopped pitted ripe olives (optional)
½ t dried Italian seasoning, crushed
1 ½ cups purchased red pasta sauce
1 ½ cups shredded Monterey Jack, mozzarella, or Italian blend cheese
¼ cup snipped fresh Italian parsley

1. Halve squash crosswise; remove seeds. Place cut sides down in 2 quart rectangular baking dish. Add ¼ cup water. Cover with vented plastic wrap. Microcook on high power 13–15 minutes or until squash is tender when pierced with fork; rearrange once for even baking. In a large skillet cook sausage, mushrooms, sweet pepper, onion, and garlic over medium heat until sausage is no longer pink; stir to break up sausage. Drain off fat.
2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Scrape pulp from squash (about 3 cups). Wipe out baking dish; coat with nonstick cooking spray. Spread half the squash in dish. Add half the sausage mixture and half the olives. Sprinkle with seasoning and 1/8 teaspoon black pepper. Top with half the sauce and half the cheese. Top with remaining squash, sausage, olives, and sauce. Bake for 30 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Bake for 5 minutes or until cheese is melted. Let stand 10 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley.

Serves 6