



Roasted Red Onions

This is one of my all-time-favorite side dishes. Every time I serve it, guests ask for the recipe. Even friends who think they don't like onions fall in love with this dish.

Serve with meat, fish or poultry. Or even with vegetarian meals. There's nothing it doesn't go with. As well, you can serve it hot out of the oven or at room temperature. Or, if you're lucky enough to have leftovers, put one or two wedges – right out of the fridge -- on a piece of crusty bread that's been coated with Dijon mustard. You won't believe how good it is!

Note: I only use 1 tablespoon of oil to make this dish, which serves 6 to 8 people. This is not a typo! Too many recipes call for excessive amounts of oil. I'm crazy about good olive oil, but not when food is swimming in it! Too little oil isn't good either. The answer lies somewhere in the middle and sometimes you have to do a little experimenting to figure out where that midpoint is.

As well, always buy the best oil you can find. If you're not sure what oils to buy, go to a good specialty store and ask for recommendations. Some stores even permit you to taste the oils they sell. Before long you'll start to get a sense of what you like and what complements your style of cooking.

6 to 8 large red onions
1 tbsp good-quality olive oil
 Salt and freshly ground pepper
1/2 cup (approx.) balsamic vinegar

Peel onions. Trim tops off, but leave root ends intact. Slice onions in half vertically through root. Cut each half into quarters, cutting through root so onion wedges hold together.

Place wedges in large bowl. Add oil and toss gently with hands until all pieces are coated. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Arrange onion wedges in single layer in large shallow baking dish. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar. Seal well with aluminum foil.

Place onions in 450F oven for about 40 minutes. Then remove foil and continue roasting until onions are soft and juices have caramelized, about 5 to 10 minutes or longer. Check periodically to make sure onions don't burn. They should be cooked just until lightly charred around the edges. (If pan liquid evaporates before onions are finished cooking, add a little water to the pan.)

Makes 6 to 8 servings.

As this is not a proper entrée, or main dish, it is hard, if not incorrect, to suggest a pairing wine. Carol often serves this dish as an accompaniment to her stunning farmhouse roasted chicken, or with her show-stopping beef brisket. They in turn have their own wine suggestions, which you will find affixed to these recipes when they appear in the weeks ahead.