

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds fresh pumpkin, seeds and fibers removed, peeled cut into 1/16-inch slices (about 4 cups)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 medium onions, sliced
- 3 ounces pancetta, cut into ¼-inch dice
- ¼ teaspoon dried thyme
- 4 ounces Gruyere cheese, grated (about 1 ½ cups)
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 cup half-and-half
- 1 cup whole-wheat breadcrumbs

DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat oven to 350°F.
2. Steam or microwave pumpkin just until tender. Sprinkle with ¼ teaspoon salt and pepper to taste, set aside
3. Heat the oil and butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onions and pancetta and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until soft. Season with thyme, the remaining ¼ teaspoon salt, and more pepper to taste.
4. Reduce heat to medium and continue cooking, stirring occasionally until the onions wilt and begin to brown and caramelize and the pancetta becomes crisp, 5 to 10 minutes.
5. Grease a low-sided, 1 -quart gratin or casserole dish with butter. Arrange half the pumpkin slices in overlapping rows in the dish. Spread the onions and pancetta evenly over the pumpkin. Sprinkle with 1 ¼ cups of the cheese and top with another layer of pumpkin slices.
6. Stir in the nutmeg into the half-and-half and pour over the vegetables.
7. Mix in remaining cheese with the breadcrumbs and sprinkle over the top. Bake for 35 to 45 minutes, or until the pumpkin is easily pierced with a fork and the top is lightly browned and bubbly around the edges.
8. Serve hot.