

MUSHROOM & SAUSAGE HOLIDAY DRESSING

2 tablespoons olive oil
6 cups chopped onions
5 cups finely chopped leeks, white and pale-green parts only
4 cups finely chopped celery
4 garlic cloves, minced
8 oz mushrooms, sliced
32 oz sausage, sliced (I used mini beef smokies & turkey-cranberry-sage sausage)
10 cups oven-dried cubed Ciabatta bread
1 cup dried cranberry
1/3 cup candied orange peel, finely chopped
1/2 cup roasted chestnuts
1 cup pecans, lightly toasted
1/4 cup chopped fresh sage
2 tablespoons fresh thyme
1-to-1 1/2 cups vegetable or chicken stock
4 oz (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted
Salt and pepper

Preheat oil until sizzling hot, then sauté onions, leeks, celery and garlic until translucent; about 15 minutes. Add mushrooms and sauté until soft. Set aside.

Stir-fry sausage, without adding oil, until sizzling and slightly caramelized. Set aside.

Combine vegetable mixture, sausage, toasted bread cubes, cranberry, orange peel, chestnut, pecan, sage and thyme. When ready to bake, mix in stock and butter and season with salt and pepper.

Transfer into a large greased casserole or two 9"x13" dish. Preheat oven to 375F for 15 minutes. Bake until dressing is thoroughly heated and top is crispy; about 45-to-60 minutes.