**Recipe of the Month : Sweet Potato Casserole with Coconut**



**Eddie’s Note**

My daughter just got married a couple weeks ago and had a menu of Southern fare for the wedding.  Unforgettable Food Affairs did an outstanding job, and everyone enjoyed their meal.  I wanted to share this Sweet Potato Casserole recipe with you because it was really good, and it was different than what most people have tasted.  I didn’t get the recipe from them, but modified a recipe on Americas Test Kitchen, like I always do.  The coconut added some great texture and seemed to enhance the traditional sweet potato casserole a bit.  I hope you enjoy it as much as we did.

**Why This Recipe Works**

Nothing against the marshmallow-topped version, but we wanted an elegant, simple sweet potato dish for the holiday table. We wrapped cubed potatoes seasoned with brown sugar in foil and baked them until they were soft. The food processor ensured a perfectly smooth puree, and butter and cream added richness, while cinnamon, orange zest, and a pinch of cayenne rounded out the flavors. Finally, a simple topping sprinkled over the casserole and a quick turn under the broiler created a crisp, caramelized crust.

**Ingredients**

SERVES 6 to 8
TIME 1¾ hours

* ¼ cup packed brown sugar
* 1 teaspoon grated orange zest plus 2 tablespoons juice
* 3 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1 1/2-inch pieces
* 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 6 pieces
* 1 cup shredded sweetened coconut
* ¼ cup heavy cream
* 1 teaspoon salt½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
* ¼ teaspoon pepper
* ⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper\*

**Instructions**

Be sure to use a broiler-safe soufflé dish.  Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 400 degrees. Mix 3 tablespoons sugar and ½ tsp orange zest together in small bowl until thoroughly combined; set aside.

Lay two 24 by 12-inch sheets of heavy-duty aluminum foil perpendicular to each other inside rimmed baking sheet. Place sweet potatoes in center of foil and sprinkle with remaining 1 tablespoon sugar. Fold opposite sides of foil toward each other and crimp edges to seal tightly. Put baking sheet in oven and bake until sweet potatoes are tender, about 60 minutes. Remove baking sheet from oven and heat broiler.

Carefully open 1 end of foil pouch, taking care to avoid escaping steam, and pour potatoes and accumulated liquid into food processor. Add butter, cream, orange juice, salt, cinnamon, remaining 1/2 teaspoon orange zest, pepper, and cayenne and process until completely smooth, 30 to 60 seconds, scraping down bowl as needed.  Fold in shredded coconut.

Transfer potato puree to 2-quart soufflé dish and sprinkle evenly with reserved sugar-zest mixture. Broil sweet potatoes until topping is lightly browned and bubbling, 2 to 4 minutes. Serve.