



Butternut Squash Pasta Salad with Brussels Sprouts, Pecans, and Cranberries



Butternut Squash Pasta Salad is a delicious Fall comfort food perfect for cozy cold nights. This meatless holiday side dish is bursting with Autumn flavors and spices (cinnamon and maple syrup) and will make a great addition to your traditional Thanksgiving or Christmas menu.

Course	Side Dish
Cuisine	American
Keyword	butternut squash pasta salad, fall pasta salad, thanksgiving pasta salad
Prep Time	20 minutes
Cook Time	20 minutes
Total Time	40 minutes
Servings	6 servings
Calories	472kcal
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Ingredients

Roasted Brussels Sprouts:

- 12 oz Brussels sprouts ends trimmed, yellow leaves removed, each sliced in half
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon Salt to taste

Roasted Butternut Squash:

- 1 lb butternut squash peeled, seeded, and cubed into 1-inch cubes (I used butternut squash that was 7.5 inches long)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Other Ingredients:

- 8 oz pasta
- 1 cup pecan halves
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar or glaze
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil optional

Instructions

How to roast Brussels Sprouts

1. Preheat oven to 400 F. Line the baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a medium bowl, combine halved Brussels sprouts, 2 tablespoons of olive oil, salt (to taste), and toss to combine.
3. Add Brussels sprouts cut sides down onto a parchment paper-lined baking sheet, and roast in the oven at 400 F for about 20-25 minutes. The cut sides should be nicely and partially charred but not blackened (see my photos).

How to roast Butternut Squash

1. Preheat oven to 400 F. Line the baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a medium bowl, combine cubed butternut squash (peeled and seeded), 1 tablespoon of olive oil, maple syrup, and cinnamon, and toss to mix.
3. Place butternut squash in a single layer on the baking sheet. Roast for 20-25 minutes, until softened.
4. **Note:** You can roast both Brussels sprouts and butternut squash on 2 separate baking sheets or on one large baking sheet at the same time, on the same rack in the oven – that's what I did.

Cook pasta

1. While the veggies are roasted in the oven, bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add pasta and cook according to package instructions, usually about 10 or 12 minutes. Drain.

How to toast pecans

1. Toast the pecans for about 5 minutes (maybe a bit longer) in the preheated oven at 350 F until they get darker in color.
2. **Note:** pecans burn really fast, so make sure to check the nuts after 5 minutes and frequently afterwards.

Assembly

1. In a large bowl, combine roasted Brussels sprouts, roasted butternut squash, cooked and drained pasta, pecans, and cranberries, and mix to combine.

Salad dressing options

1. There are 4 salad dressing options that you can drizzle over this butternut squash salad:
2. **Option 1.** Combine 3 or 4 tablespoons of balsamic vinegar and 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a small bowl and whisk to emulsify.
3. **Option 2.** Drizzle the salad with balsamic glaze (store-purchased) or homemade. To make a balsamic glaze, combine 1 cup of balsamic vinegar + ¼ cup of honey or brown sugar and cook it down until reduced at least by half. Consistency should be thick enough to coat the back of the spoon but should not be overly thick.
4. **Option 3.** Use 2 or 3 tablespoons of maple syrup plus 2 or 3 tablespoons of freshly squeezed lemon juice (not the bottled kind) as a salad dressing.
5. **Option 4.** Your favorite store-bought Balsamic Vinaigrette dressing (not the creamy kind).
6. **Option 5.** Anything pomegranate based would be good - such as pomegranate molasses mixed with a small amount of olive oil. Or store-bought Pomegranate-based salad dressing (not the creamy kind).