

## **Nueske's Autumn Bread Pudding**

I'm Janice Thomas from the Savory Spoon Cooking School in beautiful Door County, Wisconsin. You know everyone loves a cast iron skillet dish. And I'm going to show you one of my favorites.

It seems like the cast iron skillet cooking has memories of family times, comfort food, and tradition. So, in this dish, which is the savory bread pudding, we will have the tradition of bread pudding, as well as the trendiness of Tuscan kale. And the icing on the cake is the subtle smoky flavor of Nueske's Applewood Smoked Bacon.

So, what we are featuring is these beautiful vegetables from my garden. And the way I am going to put this dish together is in a cast iron skillet.

So, what I've done is I've taken some Tuscan kale and I will go ahead and cut down the rib. And then I just double it up and come back through and chop it up and into a fine dice.

And then I take the Nueske's bacon and I love to chill it in advance. You can put it in your freezer or your refrigerator. And then I just slice that up into a very nice dice.

The way it works when you put that in the frying pan is that everything will cook about the same time and get nice and crispy. And that is what we want. Brings out the best in its flavor.

So, then, in that bacon drippings of the rendering from that bacon, we're going to toss in that beautiful Tuscan kale. We'll sear that in the bacon fat.

I have chosen some of the butternut squash from my garden and I had an abundance this year. And we're going to roast it. I've been roasting this for about 40 minutes. And it has a beautiful golden caramel look to it and that is what you are looking for.

So, I'll set that down right there. And I've also soaked my bread in the eggs and the milk. And you'll use your leftover bread from your restaurant, and it will be perfect because I'm sure you have great bread there. So, we have that soaking there. And to layer this dish, we're going to take a cast iron skillet, like about this size. We're going to go ahead and put in some of our mixture of the bread that has been soaked. And then we're going to add then we are going to add layers.

We'll add a layer of the Tuscan kale. We'll add a layer of this beautiful butternut squash that has been caramelized. Some artisan cheese. And lastly the wonderful companion, the smoked bacon. Then we'll make a second layer.

After we bake this, it comes out of the oven looking just about like this. And you can make it in smaller containers if you want, but this is a beautiful way to serve it. And if you don't want to serve in cast iron, at your restaurant, what you can do is bake it in a ramakin. And then you will release it from there and present it on a plate like this, scattered with the kale and just a spear of the smoked bacon that's crisp.