Squash
Yáá téy hey. Hello, today we’re going to start off by making squash, boiled squash, which is a delicacy. It’s a dessert in Navajo. We just boil it and then we put some sugar on top of it. And what happens is it comes out really sweet and really, really soft. Because our culture did not have a way of making candy before, so they had to make substitutes.

What we have is an acorn squash, sugar, which is ashí likān and this is nayizí in Navajo. So what we did is we cut this in half, and there’s seeds in here and what we do with the seeds is most people save them, so we can replant them. That way it saves time and money at the same time. We just go and clean that out. We just cut it right down the middle. We cut them into little sections, where it’s thick enough for individuals to eat, so we just cut them up. So then they look like this when you’re done with them: little, square sections of them.

So what we have, is we’ve got a pan, and we put some water in there, some tóó. We put a lid on it, so it’s been sitting here for the past five minutes, so it should be nice and hot right about now. So we take the sections of the squash, and we gently put them in there, because if you drop it in there, the hot water is going to come splashing out and it might burn you, so be very, very careful with this.

Make sure you put them upside down in the water, that way the squash will cook better. So then we put the lid on it, and then we let this cook for at least another ten minutes until it’s nice and soft.

We’re just doing the finishing touches on the squash, or the nayizí. So first of all, we’re going to go and turn this off. Make sure it’s out. Uncover this. This smells good. Now, we’re going to take them out, and they should be nice and soft right now.

Take them out onto a bowl. Now we’re going to sprinkle just a little bit of sugar on top of them. This is what it’s going to look like.

Featuring Lanelle Pahe