
KITCHEN CONNAISSEUR

Curried Pumpkin Soup



The best Pumpkin Soup starts with "Sugar Pumpkins." These little pumpkins are perfect for roasting and turning into a puree. Larger varieties of pumpkins are thick skinned and woody. They are great for carving jack-o'-lanterns - but not for roasting, baking or cooking. Sugar Pumpkins have a very thin skin; their flesh is sweet and finer-grained than a jack-o-lantern pumpkin, making them the perfect choice for pumpkin soup! (If you cannot find Sugar Pumpkins substitute butternut squash ... the flavour will be a little different but still wonderful.)

Mirepoix is a combination of aromatic vegetables that gives a subtle background flavor to dishes such as soups, stews, and braises. The traditional French version includes 2 parts onion, 1 part carrot, and 1 part celery. In the recipe below we have included leeks because they are milder than onions and they add a wonderful flavour to the pumpkin soup.

This flavourful soup freezes well. Just stop at the step before the cream is added. Let the soup cool and put it in containers and freeze. When you are ready to serve the soup...defrost it, heat it up and add the cream just before serving.

Cooking time: 1 hour

Yield: Non sieved version 9 cups; Sieved version 8 cups

ingredients

¼ Cup	Roasted Garlic Olive Oil
1 Cup	Cooking Onion- peeled, diced
1 Cup	Leek- white area only, diced
1 Cup	Carrots- peeled, diced
1 Cup	Celery- diced
1 Whole (2 pound)	Sugar pumpkin or winter squash- peeled, cubed
1 250ml jar	Curry Cream Sauce
4 Cup	Chicken Broth
To Taste	Tuscan Herb Blend
To Taste	Salt - preferably fleur de sel
To Taste	Pepper- black, freshly ground
1 Cup (more or less)	Cream – Heavy
To Taste	White Wine

instructions

1. To make the mirepoix: In a large pot or Dutch Oven, on medium high heat - heat the Roasted Garlic Olive Oil. Add the diced onion, leeks, carrots and celery. Stir to assure that the oil lightly coats all the vegetables. Reduce heat to low. Cover the pot and allow vegetables to sweat for 5 minutes or until soft and translucent. Stir often to prevent burning.
2. Add the pumpkin or squash to the pan, stir it into the cooked vegetables. Pour the chicken stock over the mixture. Add the Curry and Cream Sauce. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer. Leave the lid slightly ajar. Simmer for 30 minutes or until the squash is very soft. Stir often to prevent burning. Using an immersion blender, thoroughly puree the soup. Season to taste with Tuscan Herb Blend, salt, and pepper.
3. *Optional step - for an extra-velvety consistency you can now push the soup through a fine sieve into another pan.*
4. Finish the soup just before serving, by adding the cream and mixing thoroughly. Bring to a quick boil and reduce the heat immediately so that the cream will not spilt and spoil the consistency.
5. This delicious soup is customizable. Serve it as is or garnish it with one of the following toppings: croutons, toasted pumpkin seeds or a kale-sesame topping.

Croutons: See our delicious crouton recipe

<http://www.kitchenconnaisseur.com/product/caesar-salad-with-bagel-chip-cROUTONS/>

Toasted Pumpkin Seeds: Preheat oven to 300F. In a bowl toss together 1-1/2 Cup raw whole pumpkin seeds and 2 Tbsp of Roasted Garlic Olive Oil. Spread the seeds in a single layer on a baking sheet and bake for about 45 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from the oven, let cool. These can be made a day ahead and stored in an airtight container.

Kale and Sesame Seed: In a small skillet over medium heat, dry toast sesame seeds for 2-3 minutes, stirring frequently until slightly golden brown. Be careful as they can burn quickly. Remove from pan and set aside. To the still hot pan, add Roasted Garlic Olive Oil. Add the kale and toss, then add a pinch of salt and cover to steam. Cook for another few minutes until kale is wilted and then add sesame seeds back in. Toss to coat and set aside for topping soup.

Roasting pumpkin for this soup: Rather than peeling and cutting the raw pumpkin you can roast it and scoop out the puree for the soup. Just follow the easy to do directions below. Preheat the oven to 350F

Cut the pumpkin in wedges and remove the seeds and innards. Place the wedges on a baking sheet. Rub Roasted Garlic Olive Oil over the flesh. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place in the lower rack of the preheated oven. Roast for 45 minutes or until soft. Remove from the oven. Let cool. Remove the crusty top and scoop out the puree.