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Winter Squash Soup

Ingredients:

1/4 cup butter
1 large onion, finely chopped
4 large garlic cloves, chopped
3 - 14 1/2-ounce cans organic chicken broth
4 cups of 1-inch pieces peeled butternut squash
4 cups 1-inch pieces peeled acorn squash
1 1/4 teaspoons minced fresh thyme
1 1/4 teaspoons minced fresh sage
1/4 cup whipping cream
2 teaspoons brown sugar

Croutons

2 tablespoons (1/4 stick) butter
12 1/4-inch-thick baguette bread slices
1 cup grated Gruyère cheese
3 oz. Gorgonzola cheese
1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme
1 teaspoon minced fresh sage

Preparation:

For soup:

Melt butter in large pot over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and sauté until tender, about 10 minutes. Add broth, all squash and herbs; bring to boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer until squash is very tender, about 20 minutes.

Working in batches, puree soup in blender. Return soup to same pot. Stir in cream and sugar; bring to simmer. Season with salt and pepper.

For croutons:

Preheat broiler. Butter 1 side of each bread slice. Arrange bread, buttered side up, on baking sheet. Broil until golden, about 1 minute. Turn over. Sprinkle cheese, then thyme and sage over. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Broil until cheese melts, about 1 minute. Ladle soup into bowls. Top each with croutons and serve.

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Spicy Southwestern Stuffed Spaghetti Squash

Adapted from wholefoodsmarket.com

Ingredients:

1 medium spaghetti squash

Filling

2 teaspoons olive or corn oil

1/2 cup red onion, chopped

1 jalapeño chili, seeded, minced

1/2 cup red pepper, chopped

1 cup black beans, rinsed and drained well

1/2 cup sweet corn, frozen or fresh

1 teaspoon chili powder

1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

All of the reserved cooked squash, about 4 cups

1/3 cup cilantro, minced

1 tablespoon lime juice

1 teaspoon sea salt

2 oz. Queso Fresco cheese (or could use Monterey Jack)

Preparation:

Roast squash in a 375° F oven for 50 minutes until tender or cut squash in half and place in a microwave dish with 1/2 inch of water, lightly covered with plastic wrap for 20 minutes on high until tender. cool. When cool, scoop flesh from squash halves leaving the shell intact for stuffing.

For the filling, heat oil in a large pan and sauté red onion, jalapeño chili and red pepper for 2 minutes. Add beans, corn, cumin and chili powder; sauté 1 minute longer. Add cooked squash, cilantro, lime juice and salt, cook 1 minute until heated through.

Fill squash halves with filling, mounding mixture in the center. Top with the Queso Fresco or Monterey Jack cheese and broil until bubbly and slightly browned.

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Spaghetti Squash Pomodoro

Adapted from epicurious.com

Ingredients:

1 spaghetti squash (about 1 1/2 lb)
Vegetable-oil cooking spray
2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
1 small onion, finely chopped
2 tsp olive oil
1 can (28 oz) diced plum tomatoes
3 tbsp tomato paste
1 tsp white wine vinegar
1 tsp fresh oregano (can use dried)
1 tsp fresh basil (can use dried)
1/2 tsp red pepper flakes
Fresh basil
Salt & fresh cracked pepper

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 375° F. Halve squash lengthwise and scoop out seeds and season with salt & pepper. Coat a baking sheet with cooking spray; lay halves, flesh side down, on sheet. Bake 35 minutes or until you can easily pierce shell. While squash bakes, sauté garlic and onion in oil over medium heat 5 minutes. Add remaining ingredients, except fresh basil and season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring occasionally, for 30 minutes. Lower heat if sauce begins to boil. Remove squash from oven. Scrape crosswise to pull strands from shell. Place in nonmetal serving bowl. Pour sauce over squash and garnish with basil. You can also top this with freshly grated parmesan or pecorino cheese.

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Crispy Spaghetti Squash Pancakes

Adapted from sheknows.com

Ingredients:

2 cups cooked, cooled spaghetti squash
1 egg
2 tablespoons grated red onion
1 tablespoon whole wheat flour
1/8 teaspoon each, salt and pepper (or to taste)
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 tablespoon butter

Preparation:

Mix squash with onion, salt, and pepper. Fold in wheat flour and beaten egg. Heat oil in a non-stick pan over medium-high heat. Using wet hands, form squash mixture into six even patties. Add butter to hot oil, followed by squash patties. Cook 3 to 4 minutes on each side, until golden brown and cooked through (cooking times will vary depending on thickness). Make them thinner if you wish them to be crispy.

**Ideas to top these little crispy critters:

Prosciutto & seasoned ricotta with fresh basil
Tomato jam
Crème fraiche or sour cream with fresh chives
Parmesan & fresh truffles (oh yep, I said it, fresh truffles - if you dare)

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Scalloped Butternut Squash

From epicurious.com

Ingredients

1 teaspoon salt

Rounded 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

5 1/2 to 6 pound butternut squash

5 ounces Oka cheese or mild Cheddar, rind discarded and cheese coarsely grated on large holes of a box grater (1 1/3 cups)

1 1/2 cups heavy cream

3 fresh thyme sprigs

Preparation

Put oven rack in lower third of oven and preheat oven to 350° F. Generously butter a 13-by 9-inch glass baking dish (3-quart capacity).

Stir together salt and pepper in a small bowl. Cut off necks of squash, reserving bottoms for another use (you will have about 3 pounds necks). Peel squash and very thinly slice crosswise with slicer.

Layer one third of squash slices, overlapping, in baking dish and sprinkle with some of salt and pepper mixture. Sprinkle with half of cheese, then layer half of remaining squash slices on top and sprinkle with some of salt and pepper mixture. Top with remaining cheese and remaining squash slices, then sprinkle with remaining salt and pepper.

Bring cream and thyme sprigs to a simmer in a small saucepan over moderate heat. Discard thyme and pour cream evenly over squash. Put a sheet of parchment paper on surface of squash and poke a few holes in parchment with a knife. Bake squash until tender, about 45 minutes.

Discard parchment and let squash stand 10 minutes before serving. If desired, cut rounds from squash with cookie cutter and transfer to plates with a spatula.

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Simple Roasted Butternut Squash

From epicurious.com

Ingredients

Nonstick vegetable oil spray

2 pounds butternut squash (about 1 large), halved, seeded, peeled, cut into 1-inch cubes

2 tablespoons olive oil

3 tablespoons unsalted butter

1/4 teaspoon freshly grated whole nutmeg or ground nutmeg

Additional nutmeg (for garnish)

Preparation

Preheat oven to 375° F. Spray large rimmed baking sheet with nonstick spray. Place squash on sheet. Drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and toss to coat; arrange squash in single layer. Bake squash until brown and very tender when pierced with fork, stirring occasionally, about 45 minutes. Transfer to bowl.

Melt butter in small saucepan over medium-low heat until foam subsides and butter turns nut-brown, about 4 minutes. Pour over squash; stir lightly to coat. Toss with more salt and 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg. Sprinkle with more nutmeg and serve.

***Please don't skip the FRESH nutmeg! It is worlds apart from its' pre-ground cousin in the jar. Fresh nutmeg can last years, and each time you freshly grate it the taste is so.. worth it.

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Risotto with Pumpkin, Spinach, Cannellini Beans, & Walnuts

Adapted from mediterrasian.com

Ingredients:

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 onion—finely chopped
2 cloves garlic – finely chopped
1 cup arborio rice
2 cups vegetable or chicken stock
½ cup white wine
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
2 cups peeled and cubed pumpkin or winter squash (cut into half inch cubes)
2 packed cups roughly chopped fresh spinach
¾ cup canned cannellini beans—rinsed well and drained
¼ cup roughly chopped toasted walnuts
1/3 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh basil

Directions:

Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large saucepan and cook the onion for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the garlic and rice, stirring to coat the grains in oil and cook for 1 minute. Add the wine, stock, salt, black pepper, pumpkin and spinach, stir to combine and bring to a boil. Cover with a lid, reduce the heat to low and cook for 20 minutes without lifting the lid. Stir in the white beans, walnuts, Parmesan, basil and remaining tablespoon of oil to combine.

Serves 2

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Spiced Pumpkin Bread Pudding with Bourbon Butterscotch Sauce

Adapted from Epicurious.com

Ingredients:

Bread pudding

- 2 cups half and half
- 1 15-ounces of pure pumpkin puree
- 1 cup (packed) plus 2 tablespoons dark brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 1/2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 1/2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 10 cups 1/2-inch cubes egg bread (brioche or challah about 10-ounces)
- 1/2 cup golden raisins
-

Butterscotch Bourbon sauce:

- 1 cup (packed) light brown sugar
- 1/2 cup light corn syrup
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon bourbon
- 1/3 cup chopped toasted pecans

Preparation:

For bread pudding:

Preheat oven to 350° F. Whisk half and half, pumpkin, dark brown sugar, eggs, pumpkin pie spice, cinnamon and vanilla extract in large bowl to blend. Fold in bread cubes. Stir in golden raisins. Transfer mixture to 11x7-inch glass baking dish. Let stand 15 minutes. Bake pumpkin bread pudding until tester inserted into center comes out clean, about 40 minutes.

For butterscotch sauce:

Bring brown sugar, corn syrup, butter, and salt to a boil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, whisking to dissolve sugar. Boil until mixture is syrupy and measures 1 1/3 cups, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat; add cream, bourbon, and pecans if desired, and stir until smooth. Let cool. This can be made 3 days ahead. Let cool completely, cover, and chill. Rewarm before serving.

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Parmesan Roasted Butternut Squash

Recipe from Epicurious.com

Ingredients

2 1/2 pounds butternut squash, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces

3/4 cup heavy cream

3 sage leaves

2/3 cup finely grated parmigiano-reggiano

Preparation

Preheat oven to 400° F with rack in middle.

Toss squash with cream, sage, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper in a 2-quart shallow baking dish. Bake, covered, 30 minutes.

Stir in half of cheese and sprinkle remainder on top. Roast, uncovered, until squash is tender and beginning to brown, about 20 minutes. Let stand about 5 minutes before serving (cream will thicken).

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The Naughty Pumpkin Stuffed with Everything Good

From Epicurious.com by Dorie Greenspan

Around My French Table: More Than 300 Recipes From My Home to Yours

Ingredients

- 1 pumpkin, about 3 pounds
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1/4 pound stale bread, thinly sliced and cut into 1/2-inch chunks
- 1/4 pound cheese, such as Gruyère, Emmenthal, cheddar, or a combination, cut into 1/2-inch chunks
- 2-4 garlic cloves (to taste), split, germ removed, and coarsely chopped
- 4 slices bacon, cooked until crisp, drained, and chopped (my addition)
- About 1/4 cup snipped fresh chives or sliced scallions (my addition)
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh thyme (my addition)
- About 1/3 cup heavy cream
- Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg

Preparation

Center a rack in the oven and preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with a silicone baking mat or parchment, or find a Dutch oven with a diameter that's just a tiny bit larger than your pumpkin. If you bake the pumpkin in a casserole, it will keep its shape, but it might stick to the casserole, so you'll have to serve it from the pot—which is an appealingly homey way to serve it. If you bake it on a baking sheet, you can present it freestanding, but maneuvering a heavy stuffed pumpkin with a softened shell isn't so easy. However, since I love the way the unencumbered pumpkin looks in the center of the table, I've always taken my chances with the baked-on-a-sheet method, and so far, I've been lucky.

Using a very sturdy knife—and caution—cut a cap out of the top of the pumpkin (think Halloween Jack-o-Lantern). It's easiest to work your knife around the top of the pumpkin at a 45-degree angle. You want to cut off enough of the top to make it easy for you to work inside the pumpkin. Clear away the seeds and strings from the cap and from inside the pumpkin. Season the inside of the pumpkin generously with salt and pepper, and put it on the baking sheet or in the pot.

Toss the bread, cheese, garlic, bacon, and herbs together in a bowl. Season with pepper—you probably have enough salt from the bacon and cheese, but taste to be sure—and pack the mix into the pumpkin. The pumpkin should be well filled—you might have a little too much filling, or you might need to add to it. Stir the cream with the nutmeg and some salt and pepper and pour it into the pumpkin. Again, you might have too much or too little—you don't want the ingredients to swim in cream, but you do want them nicely moistened. (It's hard to go wrong here.)

Continued...

Put the cap in place and bake the pumpkin for about 2 hours—check after 90 minutes—or until everything inside the pumpkin is bubbling and the flesh of the pumpkin is tender enough to be pierced easily with the tip of a knife. Because the pumpkin will have exuded liquid, I like to remove the cap during the last 20 minutes or so, so that the liquid can bake away and the top of the stuffing can brown a little.

When the pumpkin is ready, carefully, very carefully—it's heavy, hot, and wobbly—bring it to the table or transfer it to a platter that you'll bring to the table.

Serving

You have a choice—you can either spoon out portions of the filling, making sure to get a generous amount of pumpkin into the spoonful, or you can dig into the pumpkin with a big spoon, pull the pumpkin meat into the filling, and then mix everything up. I'm a fan of the pull-and-mix option. Served in hearty portions followed by a salad, the pumpkin is a perfect cold-weather main course; served in generous spoonfuls, it's just right alongside the Thanksgiving turkey.

Storing

It's really best to eat this as soon as it's ready. However, if you've got leftovers, you can scoop them out of the pumpkin, mix them up, cover, and chill them; reheat them the next day.

Bonne Idée

There are many ways to vary this arts-and-crafts project. Instead of bread, I've filled the pumpkin with cooked rice—when it's baked, it's almost risotto-like. And, with either bread or rice, on different occasions I've added cooked spinach, kale, chard, or peas (the peas came straight from the freezer). I've made it without bacon (a wonderful vegetarian dish), and I've also made it and loved, loved, loved it with cooked sausage meat; cubes of ham are also a good idea. Nuts are a great addition, as are chunks of apple or pear or pieces of chestnut.

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Butternut Squash Polenta

Recipe from Epicurious.com

Ingredients

3/4 cup finely chopped onion (1 medium)

5 tablespoons unsalted butter

12 oz butternut squash puree

2 1/2 cups water

2 cups whole milk

1 1/4 teaspoons salt

1/4 teaspoon black pepper

3/4 cup instant polenta

1 oz finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano (1/2 cup)

Preparation

Cook onion in 3 tablespoons butter in a 10-inch heavy skillet over moderate heat, stirring, until very soft, about 8 minutes. Stir in squash and cook, stirring occasionally, 2 minutes.

Bring water, milk, salt, and pepper to a boil in a 4-quart heavy pot. Add polenta in a thin stream, whisking. Cook polenta at a bare simmer, stirring with a long-handled whisk and turning down heat as needed to prevent spattering, 5 minutes.

Stir in squash mixture and cook, stirring, 3 minutes. Remove from heat, then stir in cheese and remaining 2 tablespoons butter. Serve immediately.

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Butternut Squash Galette

Recipe from Epicurious.com

Ingredients

For pastry:

1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour

1 stick cold unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch cubes

1 tablespoon chopped sage leaves

1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt

4 to 6 tablespoons ice-cold water

1 large egg, lightly beaten

For filling:

1 (2-pound) butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cut into 2- by 1/4-inch slices (4 cups)

1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt

3 tablespoons olive oil, divided

2 leeks (white and pale green parts only), thinly sliced crosswise

6 ounces soft mild goat cheese, crumbled

Preparation

Make dough:

Pulse flour, butter, sage, and sea salt in a food processor until mixture resembles coarse meal. Drizzle ice water evenly over mixture and pulse until it just forms a ball. (Do not overwork dough, or pastry will be tough.) Gently press dough into a 5-inch disk and chill, wrapped in plastic wrap, until firm, at least 1 hour.

Make filling while dough chills:

Preheat oven to 500° F with rack in middle.

Toss squash with sea salt and 1 Tbsp oil and arrange in 1 layer in a 17-by 12-inch shallow baking pan. Roast, stirring once halfway through roasting, until golden brown on edges and undersides, 20 to 25 minutes. Remove squash from oven and reduce oven temperature to 375° F.

Meanwhile, wash leeks, then cook in remaining 2 tablespoons oil with a pinch of sea salt in a 10-inch heavy skillet over medium heat, partially covered, stirring occasionally, until tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl to cool slightly. Add squash, goat cheese, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper and toss gently.

Make galette:

Roll out dough into a 13-inch round on a lightly floured surface with a lightly floured rolling pin. Transfer to a baking sheet. 3Arrange filling in an even layer in center of dough, leaving a 2- to 3-inch border. Fold dough in on itself to cover outer rim of filling, pleating dough as necessary. Brush pastry with beaten egg and bake galette until crust is cooked through and golden on edges, 35 to 45 minutes. Cool on baking sheet on a rack 10 minutes before serving.

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Autumn Butternut Squash Crostini

Adapted from epicurious.com

Ingredients

1 2-pound butternut squash, peeled, seeded, cut into 1/2" cubes (about 4 cups)
3 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided, plus more for drizzling
1 1/2 teaspoons (packed) light brown sugar
Coarse sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
24 fresh sage leaves
3/4 cup fresh ricotta
1/2 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
12 3/8"-thick baguette slices, toasted
Fresh lemon juice
5 thin slices of prosciutto (optional)

Preparation

Preheat oven to 425° F. Toss squash, 2 tablespoons oil, and sugar in a large bowl. Season with salt and pepper. Arrange in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet. Roast, tossing occasionally, until squash is golden and tender, 25-30 minutes. Let cool on sheet.

Heat 1 1/2 tablespoons oil in a small skillet over medium-high heat. Add sage; cook until edges begin to curl and turn dark green, 1-2 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, carefully transfer to paper towels to drain. Mix ricotta and lemon zest in a small bowl. Season with salt and pepper.

Spread 1 tablespoon of ricotta mixture on each baguette slice. Top each with a thin slice of prosciutto, and a few squash cubes. Drizzle crostini with lemon juice and olive oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Top crostini with 2 fried sage leaves each and a sprinkle of crisp bacon crumbles.

DO AHEAD: Butternut squash, sage leaves, and ricotta can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and chill squash. Store sage airtight at room temperature. Cover and chill ricotta mixture. Bring squash to room temperature before serving.

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Butternut Squash Carbonara

(makes 2 servings)

Ingredients

1/2 pound pasta
6 slices bacon (cut into 1 inch slices)
2 cups squash (cut into small pieces)
1 clove garlic (chopped)
1 tablespoon sage (chopped) + 1 teaspoon for garnish
pepper to taste
2 egg yolks
2 tablespoons heavy cream
1/4 cup parmigiano reggiano + more for garnishing at the table

Preparation

1. Start cooking the pasta.
2. Fry the bacon in a pan until it's just barely crisp.
3. Drain most of the bacon fat from the pan but reserve approximately 2 tablespoons to cook the squash.
4. Add the squash, garlic, sage, and pepper and toss to coat in the bacon fat.
5. Mix the egg yolk, heavy cream and parmigiano reggiano in a bowl.
6. Drain the cooked pasta reserving approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the pasta water.
7. Add the pasta to the pan with the squash and garlic and toss all together.
8. Remove the pan from the heat and wait for the sizzling to stop, and things to cool down just a bit.
9. Add the egg mixture to the pasta pan and toss to coat.
10. Add a bit of the pasta water and toss to mix and coat.
11. Season with salt and pepper to taste
12. Garnish with additional sage & cheese to taste serve.