

Butternut Squash and Apple Soup

Prep Time: 40 min Level: Intermediate Serves: 8 servings
Inactive Prep Time: —
Cook Time: 1 hr 0 min $\frac{1}{2}$ cup

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 1/2 cups sliced leeks, white parts only *or onions*
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 6 cups peeled and roughly diced butternut squash
- 3 cups peeled and roughly diced apples
- 2 teaspoons Toasted Spice Rub, recipe follows
- 6 1/2 cups chicken stock or 2 (14 1/2-ounce) cans low-sodium chicken broth mixed with 3 cups water
Note - This soup can be made vegetarian w/vegetarian broth
- Sea salt, preferably gray salt
- 1 cup chopped Spiced Candied Walnuts, recipe follows, optional

Directions

Melt the butter in a large pot over medium heat, and cook until it turns nut brown. Add the leeks and cook until slightly softened, about 2 minutes. Add the garlic and saute briefly to release its fragrance.

Add the squash and apples, raise the heat to high, and cook, stirring, until the vegetables begin to caramelize, about 5 minutes. Stir in the Toasted Spice Rub and cook briefly to toast it, about 1 minute.

Add the stock or broth-water mixture, bring to a simmer, and partially cover. Adjust the heat to maintain a gentle simmer and cook until the squash and apples are tender, about 40 minutes.

Transfer in batches to a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. Return to the pot, reheat to serving temperature, and season with salt.

Divide the soup among warmed bowls and garnish each portion with some of the walnuts, if using. Serve immediately.

Toasted Spice Rub:

- 1/4 cup fennel seeds
- 1 tablespoon coriander seeds
- 1 tablespoon black peppercorns
- 1 1/2 teaspoons crushed red pepper flakes
- 1/4 cup pure California chili powder (about 1-ounce)

- 2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons ground cinnamon

In a small heavy pan over medium heat, combine the fennel seeds, coriander seeds, and peppercorns. When the fennel turns light brown, work quickly. Turn on the exhaust fan, add the red pepper flakes, and toss, toss, toss, always under the fan. Immediately turn the spice mixture out onto a plate to cool. Put in a blender with the chili powder, salt, and cinnamon and blend until the spices are evenly ground. If you have a small spice mill or a coffee grinder dedicated to grinding spices, grind only the fennel, coriander, pepper, and chili flakes. Pour into a bowl and toss with the remaining ingredients.

Yield: about 1 cup

Spiced Candied Walnuts:

- Peanut or canola oil
- 4 cups walnut halves
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar, sifted
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- Pinch salt, or more to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

In a large, heavy-bottomed skillet, heat about 1-inch of oil to 350 degrees F.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add walnuts and blanch for 30 seconds. Drain and transfer nuts to a medium bowl. While nuts are still hot and slightly wet, add confectioners' sugar and toss to coat nuts. Stir and toss until all the sugar has melted into the nuts; if bits of unmelted sugar remain on the nuts, they will not fry properly.

Stir the nuts again before frying. Using a large slotted spoon, transfer a few nuts to the hot oil, allowing the foam to subside before adding another spoonful. (Otherwise, the oil could foam over and burn you.) Fry in small batches until the nuts are medium brown, about 45 seconds per batch; be careful not to overcook. Scatter on an unlined baking sheet to cool slightly.

In a small bowl, stir together cayenne, cinnamon, a pinch of salt, and the pepper.

While the nuts are still warm, transfer them to a bowl and sprinkle evenly with about half of the spice mix. Toss well to distribute the spices and then taste a nut. Add more spice mix, to taste, and toss well after each addition. When cool, pack in an airtight jar. They will keep at room temperature for at least 2 weeks.

Yield: 4 cups

I am always looking for a few weight loss tips. One of my favorites is eating soup. Soup is a nutritious and delicious way to lose weight! I learned long ago that making my own soup at home is an economical way to stretch my grocery dollars, make use of leftovers, control what I eat, and plan out my meals for the week. Controlling what I eat and planning my meals for the week are key to losing weight and keeping it off. As an added bonus, soup fills you up physically and lifts you up emotionally.

Eating Soup is a Nutritious and Delicious Way to Lose Weight

Soup Is Economical

Stick to broth based soups as creamy soups are harder to balance calories and fat that support a fit lifestyle. I like to keep my cabinets stocked with 98% fat free chicken broth (without MSG). This allows me to throw together a pot of soup just about anytime I want without adding salt or fat for flavor. To keep the broth economical, I generally use equal amounts of chicken broth and water to form the base. Celery, carrots, and onions are also cheap and add wonderful flavor to any soup.

What should you put in your soup? Look in your refrigerator. Look in your cabinets. Look in the freezer. You probably have many more ingredients than you realize. A few veggies, a carbohydrate (potatoes, pasta, rice, corn, or beans), and a protein (chicken, turkey, pork roast, ham, ground sirloin, beef) simmered

in your broth base will produce a lovely and economical soup from your leftovers. Experiment with spices such as rosemary, pepper, and onion powder to add additional flavor.

Low Calories High Satisfaction

Because you control what you put in your soup pot, you can keep the calories under control. Eating soup also helps you eat vegetables if you are not a big fan of veggies. The fiber in the veggies as well as the broth help keep you satisfied and full for a longer period of time. Protein also helps keep your appetite satisfied longer and adding a grain such as rice or barely helps even more.

Helps Plan Your Meals All Week Long

Making a pot of soup on the weekend can take you through a whole week of lunches at work. Planning your meals ahead of time helps you control cravings, properly fuel your body, and lose weight. Remember, you control what goes into your soup. Eating two cups of broth based soup everyday can help you lose weight and maintain a healthy diet.

Swap recipes. Experiment with making your own soup recipes. It is hard to mess up a pot of soup. After all, you are adding ingredients from your refrigerator and cabinets. These are ingredients you already love in other recipes. Eating soup is one of my favorite weight loss tips. It is a nutritious and delicious way to lose weight. It will fill you up and give you great satisfaction emotionally that you were able to throw together a yummy healthy dish using your own leftovers while setting yourself up for success throughout the week.

Soup As Nutrition

Soup is nutritious for moms during pregnancy, after birth or for baby going to solid at six months. Soup can be taken as an appetizer to stimulate the appetite or as a main course if one is not feeling well.

Soup should be made attractive and delicious to appeal to our appetite. It should not be oily or insipid in taste. It should be served in an appropriate quantity, not too big a bowl.

Here are some recipes of nutritious soup:

BROTHS are thin soup made from clear stock. You may use chicken bones, fish bones or any other meat bones for the stock. You may add vegetables; grains; slices of fish or meat to have them as complete meals.

CREAM SOUPS have thin cream sauce added and are highly nutritious. You may use milk for the cream. We normally add vegetables, meat, fish or grains.

BISQUE are thick, rich soups made from shell fish, particularly shrimps, crabs, etc. Sometimes vegetables are used.

CHOWDERS are soups made from sea food. Vegetables and crackers are generally added to thicken the soup.

PUREES are soups made from boiling any food till soft and then straining it to form a pulp. You may add vegetables or potatoes. A puree should be as smooth as thick cream.

You may add cloves, pepper, basil leaf, sage, thyme, mint or rosemary as flavors.

To thicken soups you can add plain flour, browned flour, corn starch and arrowroot flour. You should add cold water and stir the mixture well before adding slowly to the hot boiling soup. Remember to keep stirring to prevent lumps occurring. Stop when the correct thickness is achieved. You can use rice, barley, oatmeal, noodles, tapioca, sago and macaroni. Crush the macaroni to small pieces and cook till very soft and starchy.

Doctors Test Chicken Soup for a Cold - Don't Laugh

Is this a laughing matter? We couldn't restrain a chuckle or two. In the medical journal *Chest*, vol. 118, 2000, a group of physicians* not only revealed that chicken soup worked on experimental cold symptoms—but actually came up with a list of brands that were graded for presumed effectiveness. And even more—they provided a recipe!

They also noted that it was an anti-inflammatory factor or factors from the chicken that caused cold symptoms. Popular belief is that cold symptoms are caused by the organism (bacteria or virus.) What they revealed is that the runny nose, the sneezing, the headaches, are caused by the body's attempt to fight the invader, not the invader itself.

Though they did not attempt to test aspirin as an anti-inflammatory remedy, it would seem that it too could be launched in the fight against colds. Yes, it sometimes is. But perhaps it could be taken even if a headache was not present?

They also found that the vegetables cooked with the soup also had cold symptom benefits, that is, separate from the chicken. Both together were of course, superior.

Store-bought chicken soup (listed in order of presumed effectiveness):

Knorr's Chicken Flavor Chicken Noodle
Campbell's Home Cookin' Chicken Vegetable
Campbell's Healthy Request Chicken Noodle
Lipton's Cup-o-soup, Chicken Noodle
Progresso Chicken Noodle.

Other brands, including some of Campbell's, were less effective.

Here's the recipe. More work of course, but you can cut the excessive use of salt found in store-bought types:

1 5-to 6-lb stewing hen or baking chicken,
1 package of chicken wings,
3 large onions,
1 large sweet potato,
3 parsnips,
2 turnips,
11 to 12 large carrots,
5 to 6 celery stems,
1 bunch of parsley,
salt and pepper to taste.

Cover the chicken with cold water, and bring it to boiling. Add chicken wings, onions, sweet potato, parsnips, turnips and carrots. Boil about 1 1/2 hours, removing fat regularly. Add the parsley and celery. Cook all about 45 minutes longer. Remove the chicken, which is no longer used for the soup. Put the vegetables in a food processor until chopped fine or pass them through a strainer. Add salt and pepper.

Enjoy!



How to Thicken Soup

Instructions

Using Potatoes to Thicken Soup

1. Set the soup on medium low heat.
2. Peel and wash a medium sized potato.
3. Coarsely grate the potato with cheese grater or food processor.
4. Stir the potato into the soup and let it simmer until it reaches the desired thickness.

Using Beans to Thicken Soup

5. Open a can of white cannellini beans. If you don't have cannellini, use another mild flavored canned bean. Avoid using kidney beans.
6. Drain and rinse the beans.
7. Blend the beans with one cup of the soup broth in a blender or food processor, until the beans are pureed.
8. Add the bean puree back to the soup pot and let simmer on low to medium heat until thickened.

Using Flour or Cornstarch to Thicken Soup

9. Put two tablespoons of flour or cornstarch into a small mixing bowl.
10. Add just enough warm water to dissolve the flour or cornstarch. Use a fork or small whisk to mix the flour or cornstarch with the water until you have a runny paste.
11. Pour a cup of warm water into the bowl and mix.
12. Incorporate the flour/cornstarch water into the soup and let simmer on low to medium heat until thickened. If the soup doesn't thicken up enough, simply repeat steps until the soup is thick enough.

Pumpkin Cheesecake I

Prep Time: 20
Minutes

Cook Time: 50
Minutes

Ready In: 1 Hour 10
Minutes

Servings: 16

INGREDIENTS:

2 (8 ounce) packages cream cheese	1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
3/4 cup white sugar	2 eggs
1 (15 ounce) can pumpkin puree	1/4 teaspoon salt
1 1/4 teaspoons ground cinnamon	2 prepared 8 inch pastry shells
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger	

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
2. Beat together the cream cheese and the sugar, add the pumpkin and the spices. Beat in eggs one at a time. Add salt. Beat until creamy. Pour the batter evenly into the two pastry shells.
3. Bake at 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) for 50 minutes or until the knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Let cool then top with whipped topping, if desired.