



CURRIED BUTTERNUT SQUASH AND APPLE SOUP

A DUTCH OVEN MAY BE KEY TO A BETTER BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP

Butternut squash soup is a fall staple, but many recipes fail to live up to their potential, ending up too sweet or with too little squash flavor plus, prepping the squash can be time-consuming and unwieldy. We found the solution to these problems in our Dutch oven. We sautéed a shallot in butter with the reserved squash seeds and fibers before adding water for a flavorful, squash-enhanced liquid that we then used for steaming the squash.

The Dutch oven's ample size provided plenty of room for steaming, and we could drop the squash in unpeeled and quartered, which cut out lots of prep time. To complete our soup, we scooped out the cooked squash from its skin and then pureed it with some of the strained steaming liquid for a perfectly smooth texture.

Some heavy cream added richness, and a little brown sugar and curry powder balanced the squash's earthy flavor. A tart apple, such as a Granny Smith, adds a nice contrast to the sweet squash, but any type of apple may be used.

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Ingredients
Servings: 4-6

Start to finish: 1 hour, 15 minutes
6 slices hearty white sandwich bread, crusts removed, cut into 1/2 inch pieces (3 cups)
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted, plus 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
Salt and pepper
1 large shallot, chopped
2 1/2 pounds butternut squash, quartered and seeded, fibers and seeds reserved
6 cups water
1 large apple, peeled, cored, and quartered
1/2 cup heavy cream
2 teaspoons curry powder
1 teaspoon packed dark brown sugar

Preparation

Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 F. Toss bread with melted butter, season with salt and pepper, and spread onto rimmed baking sheet. Bake until golden brown and crisp, 20 to 25 minutes, stirring halfway through baking. Set aside to cool. (Croutons can be stored at room temperature for up to 3 days.)

Melt 2 tablespoons butter in Dutch oven over medium heat. Add shallot and cook until softened, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in squash seeds and fibers and cook until butter turns orange, about 4 minutes. Stir in water and 1 teaspoon salt and bring to simmer. Place squash, cut side down, and apple in steamer basket and lower basket into pot. Cover and steam until completely tender, 30 to 40 minutes. Using tongs, transfer squash to rimmed baking sheet. Let squash cool slightly, then scrape flesh from skin using soup-spoon; discard skin.

Strain cooking liquid through fine-mesh strainer into bowl. Working in batches, process squash and 3 cups strained cooking liquid in blender until smooth, 1 to 2 minutes, then return to clean pot. Stir in cream, curry powder, sugar, and remaining 2 tablespoons butter and bring to brief simmer over medium-low heat. Adjust consistency as needed with remaining strained cooking liquid. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Top individual portions with croutons before serving.

Nutrition information per serving

556 calories; 284 calories from fat; 32 g fat (19 g saturated; 1 g trans fats); 91 mg cholesterol; mg sodium; 66 g carbohydrate; 9 g fiber; 17 g sugar; 8 g protein.