



## BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP

Serves 8

Winter squash is commonly associated with butternut or acorn squash since those can easily be found in the produce aisle. You can use either here. However, there are dozens of incredible winter squash varieties gardeners can plant and harvest. They come in a wide range of sizes, from short and long trailing vines to bush- and semi-bush types. The size of the fruit also varies greatly. This would be a good time to try something new.

This is a delicious warming soup for cold weather. You can make it a meal in a bowl by topping it with roasted mushrooms, grilled shrimp or whatever you like.

3 tablespoons unsalted butter  
3 cups chopped yellow onions  
1 tablespoon chopped garlic  
1-1/2 tablespoons good quality curry powder such as Madras or to taste  
3 cups or so rich chicken or vegetable stock  
3 cups roasted butternut squash\*  
1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg  
1 tablespoon honey, or to taste  
1 cup crème fraiche or heavy cream

3 tablespoons dry sherry, or to taste  
Kosher salt and freshly ground white pepper, to taste

Garnish possibilities: Toasted pepitas (pumpkin seeds) or almonds, chopped chives and a drizzle of fruity olive or toasted nut oil, if desired

In a deep saucepan, melt the butter over moderate heat. Add the onions and garlic and sauté until very soft but not brown. Add the curry and sauté for a minute or two longer or until fragrant. Add the stock and the squash and transfer to a blender or food processor and puree, in batches if necessary.

Return mixture to the saucepan and add the nutmeg, honey and crème fraîche. Whisk to combine and bring to a simmer. Stir in sherry and correct the seasoning with salt and pepper. Thin if desired with additional stock.

To serve: ladle the soup into warm soup bowls and top with garnish of your choice.

\*To roast the squash, cut a 1-1/2-pound squash in half, scoop out seeds, season with salt and pepper and roast cut side up in a preheated 375-degree oven for 30 minutes or until flesh is soft. Scoop flesh out of shell and discard shell.

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