

Curry Pumpkin Soup

My grandmother would prepare a big batch of pumpkin soup for the adults to eat while the kids went out to get their treats for the night, and my mom took on this tradition when we were growing up. This is my rendition of the recipe she has been using for decades.

SERVES 6

2 sugar or pie pumpkins (about 2 pounds each)
2 teaspoons fine sea salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground white pepper
2 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
4 carrots, peeled and quartered
1 yellow onion, quartered
5 cloves garlic, peeled
6 cups chicken stock
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
2 bay leaves
2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
1 cup almond milk
1/2 cup full-fat coconut milk
6 ounces sweet Italian sausage, casings removed and meat crumbled
1/3 cup fresh sage leaves

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Cut the pumpkins in half and remove the seeds and stringy pulp. Sprinkle the flesh side of the pumpkin halves with 1/2 teaspoon of the salt and 1/4 teaspoon of the white pepper, then place the pumpkin halves cut side down on the prepared baking sheet. Drizzle the pumpkins with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil. Scatter the carrots, onion, and garlic around the pumpkins on the baking sheet. Roast for 45 minutes, or until the pumpkin is soft.

Scoop out the pumpkin flesh and discard the skins. Combine the pumpkin flesh, roasted vegetables, and 2 cups of stock in a blender and puree until smooth.

Heat the remaining 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil in a stockpot over medium-high heat. Add the cinnamon, ginger, cumin, coriander, allspice, and bay leaves. Stir constantly for 30 seconds, then add the remaining 4 cups stock, the maple syrup, and the pureed mixture. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer for 15 minutes. Remove the bay leaves. Season to taste with the remaining 2 1/2 teaspoons salt and 1/4 teaspoon white pepper. Stir in the almond and coconut milks, then turn the heat to low and keep the soup warm.

Put the sausage in a skillet over medium heat and cook for 5 to 7 minutes, until browned. Add the sage leaves and continue sautéing until the sage leaves are crispy and the sausage is cooked through. Drain and serve on top of the soup as a garnish.

Make It Ahead: Make the soup up to 3 days in advance and reheat over medium-low heat. To freeze, refrigerate the soup until it is cool, then freeze in an airtight container for up to 3 months. Thaw in the refrigerator overnight, then reheat in a saucepan over medium-low heat. Cook the sausage and sage just before serving.

Tidbits: You can substitute 6 (15-ounce) cans of organic pure pumpkin puree for the roasted pumpkins.

