Cooking with Butternut Squash



Butternut squash is not a vegetable - but a versatile fruit that can be toasted and roasted, and also puréed to make soup, or mashed into casseroles, breads, and muffins. Grilled butternut can be seasoned with spices such as nutmeg and cinnamon, or the center can be de-seeded and stuffed with other vegetables, before being wrapped in foil and grilled. Butternut squash is a great source of fiber, vitamin C, manganese, magnesium, vitamin A, and vitamin E.

# Farmhouse Butternut Squash Soup

[Adapted from a recipe by Ian Knauer, that appeared in Gourmet February 2009 issue.]

4 real or soy bacon slices

4 large garlic cloves, chopped

2 large shallots

1 teaspoon caraway seeds

2 pounds butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and chopped

1/2 pounds carrots, chopped

1 Granny Smith apple, peeled, cored, and chopped

2 teaspoons ginger or 5 shredded, dry ginger

1 teaspoon cinnamon or 2 cinnamon springs

3 thyme sprigs

1 California bay leaf

3 1/2 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth or vegetable broth

2 cups water

1 to 1 1/2 teaspoons cider vinegar

1. Cook bacon until crisp, then place on paper towels to drain grease.

2. Lightly sauté garlic and shallots in olive oil and set aside briefly.

3. Place squash, carrots, apple, thyme, bay leaves, ginger, cinnamon, broth, water, in a large pot and boil, uncovered, until vegetables are tender, for about 20 minutes. Add sautéed garlic and shallots to the pot during the last 5 minutes.

4. Discard thyme and bay leaves.

5. Purée the soup, in appropriately-sized batches in a blender, until the mix is smooth - taking special care when blending hot liquids.

6. Return the purée to the large pot and season with salt, pepper, and vinegar. Serve topped with crumbled bacon or soy bacon.

**Yields 6-8 servings.**