

Roast Pumpkin Soup with Brown Butter and Crispy Sage

INGREDIENTS

- 1 whole pumpkin (butternut or Japanese)
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 pinch of salt and freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste
- 4 sprigs of sage
- 1 cup sliced leeks
- 1/2 cup sliced carrots
- 1/2 cup sliced shallots
- 1/2 cup diced brown onion
- 6 garlic cloves, peeled and smashed
- 4 cups of vegetable stock, plus extra if necessary
- 1/4 cup crème fraiche
- 1 pinch freshly grated nutmeg
- 2 tbsp butter
- 1 splash extra virgin olive oil, to garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 180 degrees. Cut the pumpkin in half and set aside one half.
2. Scoop out the seeds from the other half and place in a roasting pan or on a baking tray. Place some sage leaves in the cavity of the pumpkin. Add salt and pepper. Then drizzle with olive oil.
3. Roast for approximately 1 hour or until tender.
4. Remove the pumpkin from the oven and let it cool, then scoop out and reserve the flesh.
5. Peel and dice the other half of the pumpkin.
6. Put the remaining oil in a stock pot over medium to high heat, add the leeks, carrots, shallots and onions and cook, stirring often, for about 6 minutes.

7. Add the diced pumpkin and garlic and cook gently for 3 minutes, reducing the heat as necessary to keep the garlic and pumpkin from colouring.
8. Add the stock and bring to a simmer. Cook for 10 to 15 minutes or until the pumpkin is tender.
9. Add the flesh from the roasted pumpkin and simmer gently for about 30 minutes for the flavours to blend. Using a stick blender, blitz until you have reached your desired smoothness.
10. Add stock if needed to thin. Taste the soup and adjust the seasoning.
11. Meanwhile, if using sage leaves to garnish, heat butter in a very hot pan. When the butter is hot, add the sage and cook for 30 to 45 seconds, turning the leaves to crisp them on both sides. When the bubbling stops, the moisture in the leaves will have evaporated and the leaves will be crisp. Drain the sage on paper towels and sprinkle with salt.
12. Ladle the soup into serving bowls. Top each with a dollop of crème fraîche. Grind some black pepper over the top and garnish each with 2 sage leaves and a little sprinkle of nutmeg. Drizzle a little olive oil over the top and serve.