

Ingredients for Betty's Butternut Squash Soup:

1 medium butternut squash (seeds removed and reserved for roasting)
1 1/4 cup chopped sweet onion
1/2 cup chopped red bell pepper
1/2 cup chopped carrot
2-3 garlic cloves chopped
3/4 tsp Madras curry powder (up to 2 tsp depending on taste)
1/4 cup half n' half or light cream
3 cups low sodium chicken broth (more or less depending on desired soup consistency)

Optional Ingredients:

cilantro leaves (purée in for a different twist, or a sprig for garnish)
fresh ginger root (grated about 1/2 tsp)
red or green jalepeño pepper (1 tsp diced if you want it extra spicy)

**Directions:**

1. Start by roasting butternut squash seeds. Carefully cut butternut squash in half.
2. Scoop seeds from cavity.
3. Clean pulp and fibers from seeds.
4. Place on baking sheet, drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with a little sea salt and pepper.
5. Bake in a 375 (F) oven for 5 minutes. Stir seeds around. Bake for another 5 - 8 minutes until golden brown and very crispy.
6. Next, roast butternut squash: Drizzle halves of squash with olive oil and sprinkle with a little sea salt and pepper.
7. Bake in a 375 (F) oven for 35-40 minutes or until tender.
8. Allow to cool. Cut/scoop squash from peel (approximately 4 cups of squash chunks).
9. Time to make the soup: In a large pot, sauté sweet onion, red bell pepper and carrot in

- extra virgin olive oil until tender. Season with sea salt and black pepper (and optional jalepeño, if desired).
10. Add garlic and splash of chicken broth (to protect garlic from burning). Cook a few minutes until gently bubbling. (Add optional grated ginger, if desired.)
 11. Add butternut squash chunks and cover with chicken broth. Add a few more cracks of black pepper if desired.
 12. Bring to a gentle bubbling. Cook for about 5 more minutes.
 13. If you have an immersion blender, use it! Betty doesn't have one... but she does have a blender! Carefully ladle mixture into blender.
 14. Set blender to lowest setting, **put lid on (!)** and pulse on lowest speed. Gradually purée; increase speed until inverted tornado forms. Blend until mixture is as smooth as possible. Add a touch more chicken broth while blending if necessary for extra smoothness. Be patient during this step! Take your time; don't rush it! If you do, you may end up with soup all over your kitchen! Talk about scary.
 15. Return purée to large pot. Add curry powder and stir in.
 16. Add cream and stir in.
 17. Mixture will be silky smooth, thick and delicious. Add additional curry to taste.
 18. Garnish with roasted squash seeds and dollop of light sour cream. Serve piping hot!