



Watertown Farmers' Market Culinary Corner

October 7, 2020

Welcome to Eat Well Watertown's Culinary Corner! Each week, we'll feature Watertown Farmers Market products and vendors. We'll offer nutritional and culinary tips, and recipes for you to experiment with. We hope that you'll be encouraged to try new or unfamiliar vegetables and fruits, and we'll help you pair them with meats and fish from the Farmers Market walkway.

Winter Squash

Written By: Eat Well Chef Judy

All varieties of Winter Squash are remarkably versatile; you can use them in appetizers, soups, entrees, side dishes, desserts, and even in drinks.

I love warming soups in the cold weather, and butternut soup is one of my favorites. Sometimes I add apples or pears, or carrots, or ginger, or whatever I have on hand that seems to go well with the squash.

The opening created when seeds are removed begs to be filled. You might choose a sweet and spicy filling with soft dried fruit such as raisins or cranberries, and sweetened with maple syrup or brown sugar, or a savory filling with rice or breadcrumbs, some chopped up vegetables, and cheese. Experiment with anything you like.

And I strongly recommend you try Delicata squash, whose skin is delicate enough to eat (hence its name).

Please note that all my recipes use approximate quantities, and recommend that you experiment with adding and deleting ingredients, according to your own taste, preferences, and whatever you have in your kitchen. This is particularly recommended for seasonings such as salt, herbs and spices.

Roasted Butternut Squash, Pear, & Ginger Soup

(Adapted from Epicurious magazine, which got the recipe from Deborah Madison, Vegetable Soups from Deborah Madison's Kitchen)

Feel free to omit or add ingredients, based on your own likes and dislikes

- 1 butternut (or other variety of winter squash), rinsed
- 2 or 3 pears (or apples) cored, quartered, seeds removed
- 1 onion (or 2 shallots), thinly sliced
- 1 chunk of fresh ginger, 1-2", peeled and thinly sliced (tip: use a small teaspoon to scrape the skin off)
- Olive oil, or vegetable oil, or butter
- Nutmeg and/or cinnamon, optional

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Cut the squash in half, scrape out the seeds (save them for the stock), then cut each half into thirds. Put in a large baking dish with the pears and ginger. Brush with oil, season with salt, and bake until fragrant and tender, about 1 hour, turning the pieces once or twice so that they have a chance to caramelize on more than one surface. If the squash seems very dry, slowly add ½ - 1 cup water to the pan to create steam and cover with foil.

When the squash is tender, transfer everything from the pan to a cutting board, add 1 cup water to the pan, and scrape to dissolve the juices, reserving the liquid. Scrape the flesh of the squash away from the skins, saving the skins. You should have about 2 cups.

Place approximately 6 cups of water in a soup pot then add the seeds and squash skins, another small slice of ginger, and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Add a cinnamon stick or a few shakes of cinnamon, and nutmeg, if desired. Bring to a boil, then lower heat and simmer, covered, for 20 to 25 minutes.

Melt the butter in a separate soup pot. Add the onion, stir, and cook over medium-low heat, stirring frequently, until it begins to brown a bit and is fragrant, about 10 minutes. Add the pears, ginger, and squash, then the reserved deglazing water. Strain the stock into the pot. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer, covered, for 25 minutes.

Cool briefly, then puree until smooth and pass through a food mill or strainer to ensure a silky texture. Serve as is, or swirl in some crème fraiche, yogurt, or sour cream.

Links to Additional Squash Favorites:

[Cheese Crusted Acorn Squash](#); [Baked Delicata Egg Cups with Crispy Herbed Crumbs](#)