

FROM THE KITCHEN OF PIZAZZ

pumpkin and chestnut soup

The mix of chestnuts and pumpkin, along with warm cinnamon are sure to put you in the mood to cuddle up by a crackling fire when the autumn air turns crisp outside.

pumpkin and chestnut soup

ingredients

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp butter or margarine
- 1 small pumpkin (or squash)
- 2 shallots
- 1 medium onion - chopped
- 15 chestnuts
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- salt
- pepper
- 1/2 cup sherry
- 1 cup red or white wine
- 3 cups vegetable stock made from 2 stock cubes

preparing chestnuts

1. Roast the chestnuts either in a microwave or in the oven. With either method begin by cutting an X through the rounded top of each nut.
2. Microwave on high for 90 seconds or until all the nuts have split open. Allow to cool and then peel and roughly chop.

Or, toss with salt, pepper and 1/3 cup of canola oil. Spread on a baking sheet—roast in the oven at 425 degrees until tender, approximately 25 to 35 minutes. Return to bowl, toss, and wrap bowl tightly with plastic wrap. Cool, peel and roughly chop.

soup preparation

1. Cut small pumpkin in half lengthways, then microwave at high 7 to 10 minutes or until soft. Scoop out and throw away the seeds. Then scoop out the fleshy part and set aside.
2. On medium setting, heat oil in large stockpot. Once oil is heated, add butter and then shallots, onion and chopped chestnuts. Cook until onions are soft and transparent.
3. Add pumpkin to mixture. Cook for 2 - 3 minutes. Add cinnamon and salt and pepper to taste.
4. Add sherry, wine and vegetable stock. Reduce heat and simmer for 45 minutes.
5. Puree mixture in a blender until smooth.
6. Return to stockpot and reheat when ready to serve. Adjust seasoning if necessary.



tip on choosing fresh chestnuts

Look for chestnuts with a rich brown outer shell; the meat inside should be a cream color. To test freshness, shake them – if they're getting old, the nut inside will be hard and will rattle and the color will be very dark. Discard nuts that are coated with black mold or pitted with black spots when you peel them. Don't purchase nuts that are cracked and obviously dried out.

Pizazz



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