

Pumpkin Soup

<http://userealbutter.com/2010/10/06/pumpkin-soup-recipe/>

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5-pound sugar or pie pumpkin
6 tbsps extra virgin olive oil
Kosher salt
cracked black pepper
1 large carrot, peeled and large diced
1 red onion, peeled and diced
2 stalks celery, large diced
5 cloves garlic, smashed and peeled
1 tbsp fresh sage, chopped
1 medium sweet potato, peeled and medium diced
1/2 tsp nutmeg, freshly grated
1 bay leaf
2 quarts chicken stock
1/2 cup heavy cream
2 tbsps butter
2 tsps pumpkin seed oil (if you don't have that, you can use olive oil)

Heat the oven to 450°F. Lop the top off of the pumpkin and cut it into quarters. Scrape out the seeds and the innards and set the seeds aside. Place the pumpkin quarters in a baking dish and drizzle with 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Season with salt and pepper and bake for about 30 minutes or until the pumpkin is soft enough to scoop with a spoon. Let cool to room temperature. Spread the pumpkin seeds on a baking sheet and lightly coat with 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Bake in the oven with the pumpkin, until the seeds start to brown (5 to 10 minutes). Remove from oven and season with salt. Scoop the pumpkin flesh from the pumpkin and set aside.

Place a medium stockpot over medium heat. Pour in the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Add the carrot, onion, celery, and garlic to the hot oil and cook. Stir occasionally until the vegetables are softened and the onion is translucent (takes about 10 minutes). Add the sage and cook until you can smell the aroma of the herb. Add the sweet potato, nutmeg, and bay leaf to the stockpot. Pour in the chicken broth and pumpkin flesh. Bring the soup to a boil and then reduce to a simmer for about 15 minutes or until the sweet potato is fork-soft. Remove the bay leaf and purée three-quarters of the soup in a blender and push through a strainer (whoops! I forget to strain it). Season with salt and pepper to taste. Add the cream and butter. Bring soup to a boil and reduce to low heat. Let simmer until soup is thickened to your liking (about 10 minutes). Serve with pumpkin seeds and a dash of the pumpkin seed oil per bowl. [Jen's note: I used olive oil and I garnished with fresh sage leaves fried in butter and thin slices of Yukon gold potato fried in oil.] Serves 4 (generously).