

Uchiki Kuri Soup

1 uchiki kuri squash
3 T butter
2 shallots, diced
1 leek, diced
Sea salt to taste
1/2 T fresh sage, minced
1/2 T fresh rosemary, minced
1/2 t coriander
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 T sliced ginger
1 bay leaf
1 apple, peeled and chopped
4 c vegetable broth
1/3 c sauvignon blanc
1 T honey with rosemary infusion
1/2 c ricotta
Salt and pepper to taste



Optional garnishes:

1 t nonfat plain yogurt, mascarpone, or crème fraiche
1 T toasted pecans
1 T cooked pancetta

Preheat the oven to 400F. Slice the squash in half and scoop out the seeds and pulp. Place the squash skin side down in a casserole or baking dish, brush it with olive oil and season with sea salt. Fill the dish with 1/4" of water and bake the squash for 30 minutes, uncovered.

When the squash is finished remove from the oven and set aside to cool. Next melt the butter in a large stock pot and toss in the onions, leeks, bay leaf, rosemary, sage, coriander and sea salt to taste. While the leeks and onions sauté for 3 to 5 minutes, cut the squash away from the skin and chop coarsely. Add the garlic to the stock pot and cook for another 30 seconds, or until garlic becomes fragrant. Next add the squash, ginger and apples to the pot. Season with a bit more sea salt and stir for another minute. Next add the vegetable stock and white wine and simmer for 20 to 30 minutes or until the apples are tender.

After simmering, stir in the honey and discard the bay leaf. In a blender, puree in small batches, until the soup is smooth. (An immersion blender can also be used to blend, directly in the stock pot.) Spoon soup into bowls and garnish with mascarpone, crème fraiche or plain yogurt as well as toasted pecans and crispy sautéed pancetta.