

FRAGRANT ROASTED SWEET POTATO, CARROT AND LIME SOUP



I know I've recently posted another veggie soup, but frankly, at this time of year, I think there's no such thing as too much soup! It's the culinary equivalent of a big hug to warm the soul. This is another soup that is both healthy and nourishing, but I've been inspired by the flavours of Middle Eastern cuisine, one of my favourites. I always feel cheated when a soup is described as 'spiced' but then the spices are barely there, so this soup has loads of fragrant Middle Eastern spices, along with fresh ginger and herbs. I have used roasted sweet potato and carrot as the core vegetables, but you could also substitute butternut squash.

Ingredients

- 500g sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
- 300g carrots, peeled and cut into chunks
- 3 tbsp olive oil or vegetable oil
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tbsp ras al hanout
- 2 red onions, roughly chopped
- 2 fat cloves of garlic, crushed



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- thumb-sized piece fresh root ginger, peeled and finely chopped
- 3 tbsp chopped coriander root
- 1 litre vegetable stock
- 1 lime, juice only
- 100ml crème fraîche, fromage frais or natural yogurt, plus extra to serve
- salt and freshly-ground black pepper
- fresh coriander leaves, to serve
- lime wedges, to serve
- sprinkling of dried rose petals (optional), to serve
- bread of your choice, to serve

Method

1. Heat oven to 220C and put the sweet potatoes and carrots into a large roasting tin, drizzle with 2 tbsp of the oil, then place in the oven and roast for 25-30 minutes or until caramelized and tender. Remove from the oven and reserve.
2. Meanwhile, put the coriander and cumin seeds into a large, deep saucepan over a medium heat for 1-2 minutes until starting to crackle and release their aromas (taking care not to burn). Reduce the heat to medium-low.
3. Add the remaining 1 tbsp oil, along with the onion, and sweat down heat for about 10 minutes until softened. Add the garlic, ginger, coriander root and ras el hanout and stir for 1 minute, then add the roasted vegetables, followed by the vegetable stock. Simmer for 5-10 minutes until all the vegetables are very soft.
4. In batches, blitz the mixture in a blender until smooth. Thoroughly stir in the lime juice and yogurt or crème fraîche, then season to taste. Gently reheat to serve, if necessary.
5. Serve garnished with a little extra crème fraîche, fromage frais or natural yogurt, a few fresh coriander leaves, a sprinkling of dried rose petals, and a lime wedge, along with the bread of your choice.

