

Roasting Squashes

Introduction

Roasting squashes, particularly for soup, helps bring out the flavour of the squash and makes preparation much easier and faster (and safer!)

The alternative is to peel, clean, dice and boil the squash, and if you've ever done that with hard squash such as butternut squash, you will know how painful that that can be on the hands – not forgetting the orange fingers!

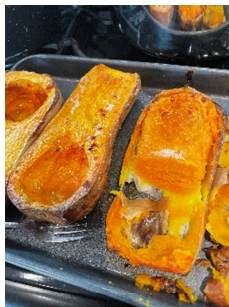
This technique works with most squashes such as butternut squash, spaghetti squash and even some varieties of courgette.

Butternut Squash Method

- Pre-heat the oven to 180°
- Cut the squash in half
- Scoop out the seeds and membrane
- Put the squash, face up, on the baking tray
- Brush olive oil over the exposed surface
- Lightly season with salt and pepper
- Place a sprig of rosemary in each bowl
- Pop in the oven for 1 hour

They are easy to scoop out with a spoon but take care not to catch any skin as it is paper thin and easy to tear.

If the flesh of the squash is not totally soft, that's not a problem as it will still be cooked with the rest of the ingredients in a soup.



Spaghetti Squash Method

This is very similar to the butternut squash method, but you may want to try different herbs such as Thyme.

The cooked skin is a bit thicker than butternut squash and is less prone to tearing when you scoop out the flesh.



The flesh has a totally different appearance – like strands of spaghetti – hence the name!

These are not common in the supermarkets but are very easy to grow in Scotland.

The seeds are easy to germinate and grow if washed, dried and stored until next year.

Courgette

Again, a very similar technique to the butternut squash, but with a shorter cooking time. This works best with ball-shaped courgette (Eclipse). It's worth noting that courgette tends to be much softer and easier to dice so you can simply wash and dice – with skin on – before roasting.



Notes

Some cooking books suggest we cook these with the cut-face down. I don't!

It makes sense to add a little bit seasoning to the cut side and not the skin.

I also like to use the "bowl" to hold a bit of oil and the herbs – particularly if they are like rosemary stalks or bay leaf that we want to remove after roasting.