

Recipe

Butternut Squash & Goat Cheese on Pumpernickel (with Pumpkin Seeds & Sage)

Ingredients & Directions

For butternut squash spread

1 medium butternut squash (about 1 lb.), peeled, deseeded and cut into 1-inch cubes
2 tsp. kosher salt
1/4 tsp ground white pepper
1/4 tsp ground clove
1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
1/4 tsp curry powder
1/2 tsp ground cumin
1/4 tsp ground ginger
1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
1/2 cup dark brown sugar
1/4 cup olive oil
6 fresh sage leaves, picked from stems and chopped

- Submerge chopped butternut squash in cold water & 1 tsp salt in a medium saucepan
- Bring to a boil and continue boiling until squash is fork tender, or about 20 minutes
- Strain and add to a Cuisinart or other food processor fitted with a metal blade
- Add the rest of the ingredients and pulse about 10 times, then puree for about 1 minute until smooth.
- Remove and let cool

For pumpkin seeds

1/2 cup pumpkin seeds (pepitas)
1 tsp olive oil
1/2 tsp salt
1 pinch cayenne pepper



- Preheat oven to 350 degrees
- Combine seeds, oil, salt, and cayenne in small bowl and toss until coated
- Place seed on a cookie sheet in a single layer and toast on 350 for 5 minutes
- Set aside and let cool

For toast

1 half loaf pumpernickel sliced into 1-inch slices, and each piece cut in half on a diagonal
3 Tbls. butter, melted
Salt to taste

- Arrange slices of bread on a sheet tray
- Brush each piece with melted butter
- Heat a large nonstick sauté pan over medium-high heat.
- Layer bread butter-side down onto pan in a single layer; lightly brown them
- Turn each piece and toast a little more on other side

Prepare

- Spread 1 Tbls. room-temperature butternut squash puree onto toast
- Assemble about 2 tsp. fresh goat cheese on top of the squash puree on the toast
- sprinkle with 1½ tsp. toasted pumpkin seeds
- Serve as an hors d'oeuvre course

Chef's Notes

For fun I like to sprinkle these with fennel pollen, if it can be found. It is an extra-special addition, but the recipe is perfectly delicious without it.

In turn I also like to lightly fry in a small layer individual sage leaves in hot vegetable oil, and place one leaf atop each piece of toast for an even “fancier” look.

These toasts are a wonderful fall or winter treat, and remind me of the flavors of pumpkin roulade.

