

Azteca Squash Soup

1 1/2 lbs butternut squash,
 halved lengthwise, seeded
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1 3/4 cups chopped onions
1 cup chopped celery
2 garlic cloves, chopped
6 cups vegetable broth, divided
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 cup canned black bean, drained and rinsed
1 cup frozen corn kernels
1 cup red bell pepper, chopped
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro, plus
 fresh cilantro stem (to garnish)
1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
1 teaspoon minced serrano chili, seeded
Coarse sea salt, plain fat-free yogurt



Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray baking sheet with nonstick cooking spray. Sprinkle cut halves of squash with salt and pepper. Arrange, cut side down, on prepared sheet. Roast squash until tender, about 1 1/2 hours. Turn squash cut side up and cool. Scoop squash out into medium bowl.

Heat oil in heavy large pot over medium heat. Add chopped onion, and saute until pale golden, about 10 minutes. Mix in chopped celery and garlic cloves. Add 1 cup broth. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add squash, 5 cups broth, and cumin. Cover and simmer 20 minutes to blend flavors.

Working in batches, puree soup in blender until smooth. When finished, return soup to pot and adjust to desired consistency with vegetable broth. Add black beans, frozen corn, chopped red bell pepper, cilantro, thyme, and serrano chile. Cover and simmer 10 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Garnish each with dollop of yogurt and sprig of cilantro.

Serves 8.

Bon Appetit Magazine, December 2008, vegetarian soup from Rancho La Puerta, Tecate, Mexico