

Pumpkin & pear soup with crumbled Stilton

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Pears are roasted to sweet perfection with butternut pumpkin and puréed to create a creamy soup that gets a luxurious garnish of Stilton cheese.

You can serve this as a first course or with a salad and crusty bread for a light autumn supper.

Ingredients (serves 6)

- 2 ripe pears, peeled, quartered and cored
- 1 kg butternut pumpkin, peeled, seeded and cut into 5 cm chunks
- 2 medium tomatoes, cored and quartered
- 1 large leek, pale green and white parts only, halved lengthwise, sliced and washed thoroughly
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 tsp salt, divided
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- 4 cups vegetable broth or reduced-sodium chicken broth, divided
- 2/3 cup crumbled Stilton or other blue-veined cheese
- 1 tbsp thinly sliced fresh chives
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Method

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Preheat oven to 200°C.

Combine pears, pumpkin, tomatoes, leek, garlic, oil, salt and pepper in a large bowl; toss to coat. Spread evenly on a large rimmed baking sheet. Roast, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender, 40 to 55 minutes. Let cool slightly.

Place half the vegetables and two cups broth in a blender; purée until smooth. Transfer to a large saucepan. Purée the remaining vegetables and two cups broth. Add to the pan and stir in the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt.

Cook the soup over medium-low heat, stirring, until hot, about 10 minutes. Divide among 6 bowls and garnish with cheese and chives (or shallots).

Author: Shannon Dunn

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