

Yellow Split Pea & Butternut Squash Soup

Swick

Serves 1 | Active Time: 30 minutes | Total Time: 1 hour

Step 1: Starting the Soup

- 1 tbsp cumin seeds
- 1 tbsp coriander seeds
- 1 onion, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp grated ginger
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and chopped
- 1 1/2 cups yellow split peas, rinsed
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- cayenne, to taste (approx. 1/4 to 1/2 tsp)
- 8 cups vegetable stock or water
- 1 1/2 lb butternut squash, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces (about 5 cups)
- sea salt, to taste
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste

To start, in a dry skillet, lightly toast the cumin and coriander until aromatic, about 30 seconds. Transfer the seeds to a mortar and lightly crush — or grind in a spice grinder.

To begin the soup, heat a large heavy-bottomed pot over medium heat. Once hot, add the onions and a good pinch of salt and dry-sauté the onions until soft and translucent.

Next, add the garlic, ginger and jalapeño and cook for about 30 seconds before adding the tomato paste. Let this cook for about a minute. Next, add the split peas and spices and stir to combine the ingredients. Lastly, add the stock (or water) and bring the mixture to a gentle boil, over medium-high heat. Then reduce the heat and let cook for approximately 20 minutes. Stir occasionally to ensure the peas to not stick and burn to the bottom of the pot.

Once the peas are somewhat cooked and almost al dente, add the squash and continue to cook the soup for another 15 to 20 minutes, or until the peas have cooked through. If the peas are still very slightly al dente, cover the pot, turn off the heat, and let the soup sit for an additional 15 minutes. This will also allow the soup to cool slightly before puréeing it.

Step 2: Finishing the Soup

- 1/2 tsp garam masala, or to taste
- sea salt, to taste
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- fresh lemon juice, to taste (approx. 1/2 a lemon)
- fresh cilantro, for garnish
- roasted butternut squash or sweet potatoes, for garnish (optional)
- fried shallots, for garnish
- chile flakes (optional)

To finish the soup, add the garam masala and lemon juice and taste for seasoning. Adding more garam masala, lemon juice, salt and/or pepper to taste.

To blend the soup, either use an immersion blender or food processor — which will produce more of a chunky soup — or use a high-speed blender for a smoother texture. If using a blender, work in batches and blend the soup for at least a minute or two, or until very smooth. Pour the soup into a clean pot.

Next, bring the soup back up to a gentle simmer. If the soup seems a bit too thick, add a bit of water or stock. Lastly, taste for seasoning, adding more salt, pepper, lemon or garam masala, if needed.

To serve the soup, ladle into warm bowls garnish with your favorite toppings. For this soup, adding back a bit of texture — like garnishing with roasted vegetables or fried onions or shallots — makes for nice contrast against the smooth soup.

Serve with chopped cilantro, extra lemon wedges and chiles flakes, if desired.