



Red Curry and Coconut Butternut Squash Soup

Makes 4 to 6 servings

Roasting the Squash

1 medium size butternut squash (about 1 ¼ pounds)
2 tablespoons canola or grapeseed oil
2 tablespoons light agave syrup
Kosher salt

Coconut-Curry Paste

3 cans (14.5 ounce) coconut milk
1 to 2 tablespoons Thai red curry paste (Mae Ploy is a good commercial brand)
½ cup golden brown sugar, plus more for finishing the soup

1. Preheat the oven to 325° Fahrenheit. Trim the ends of the butternut squash. Split it in half lengthwise. Using a kitchen spoon scrape the seeds and fibrous materials out of each half. Split each half lengthwise, so there are four quarters. Line a baking sheet tray with parchment paper. Place the butternut squash quarters on the sheet tray skin side down. Combine the oil and agave syrup together in a small mixing bowl and whisk together until they are emulsified and no longer separated. Brush the oil and agave mixture over the butternut squash, applying liberally. Season the butternut squash with kosher salt (about 1 teaspoon per quarter). Roast the squash for about 30 to 45 minutes or until the flesh is tender and golden brown. The squash is done when a knife inserted into the flesh meets no resistance.
2. Open the top of each can of coconut milk. Using a soup spoon, scoop the cream off of the top of each can of coconut milk into a small saucepan (1 quart). You should get about ¾ cup of cream total. Pour the remaining thinner liquid, which is the milk, into a mixing bowl and reserve. Over medium heat, bring the coconut cream to a boil and turn heat down to a simmer. Reduce the cream until it becomes thick and the oil separates out. This process may take a while and will require constant stirring with a wooden spoon. Be careful as the cream may start to spatter as it reduces. Once the coconut cream separates add the curry paste and fry, stirring constantly, until the paste becomes fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add the ½ cup of brown sugar and continue to cook for an additional 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and reserve for later use. This is the coconut curry paste that will be used to flavor the soup.
3. Scoop the butternut squash flesh out of the skin with a metal kitchen spoon. Combine the squash and reserved coconut milk in a large saucepot and bring the mixture to a simmer over medium heat. Make sure to stir the soup often through the cooking process to avoid scorching. Add half of the coconut-curry paste to the soup and simmer for 15 minutes. Puree the soup in a blender or with a hand blender until it is smooth. Strain the pureed soup through a fine mesh sieve into a clean saucepot. Bring the soup back to a simmer and thin with a little water if necessary. Taste the soup and adjust the seasoning with kosher salt. Add more of the coconut curry paste to give the soup more heat and finally add more brown sugar to the desired sweetness.

Equipment: Cutting board and knife, measuring spoons, measuring cups, baking sheet tray lined with parchment, 2 small mixing bowls, whisk, pastry brush, soup spoon, small (1 quart) sauce pan, wooden spoon, metal kitchen spoon, 2 large sauce pans, blender and a fine mesh sieve.