

CURRIED SQUASH SOUP

From the Kitchen of: Rembrandt van der Ploeg and Marcia van der Ploeg, Community Members

Preparation Time: 30 minutes | **Cook Time:** 1 hour | **Yield:** 4 quarts, or 10 (12-ounce) bowls

Common Allergens: Milk (Optional), Wheat, Tree Nuts



"Our 2024 community farm harvest! The squash lasted into the winter so that we could make this warming soup!"

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 large carrots
- 1 large onion
- 6 Tablespoons butter or plant-based butter, divided
- 1 (4-ounce) jar of mild, vegan Thai red curry paste
- 2-3 Tablespoons sambal or red chili paste, or to taste
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 8 cups winter squash of choice, (such as acorn, butternut, delicata, honeynut, kabocha, etc.), peeled and chopped
- 1/4 cup flour
- 6 cups vegetable or chicken broth
- 2 (14-ounce) cans coconut milk
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Naturally sweet and creamy, this soup showcases the best flavors of winter squash! This recipe is a twist on a classic pureed squash soup yet draws on Thai-inspired ingredients to add a punch of flavor that perfectly complements the sweetness of the squash.

"When I was young, my mother, Marcia van der Ploeg, would make this dish every autumn or winter. My family and I are members and descendants of the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians (Waganakising Odawa). Each fall, my mom goes up North to our reservation in Harbor Springs to help harvest vegetables from the community farm with her sisters and cousins. She often comes back with basketfuls of vegetables to share with loved ones - from tomatoes to squash!" says Rembrandt, who says that this soup changed his mind about not liking squash.

"My mother taught me how to make this soup, which she invented to combine her love of global flavors with Indigenous cuisine. Cooking this soup has become an annual family tradition that connects us to each other, our ancestors, and our traditional homelands here in Michigan," Rembrandt shares.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Peel and roughly chop the carrots and onion.
- Heat a stock pot over medium heat with 3 Tablespoons of butter. Once hot, sauté the chopped onion, carrots, red curry paste, sambal or chili paste, and the minced garlic until the onions have softened, around 3 minutes. Season the sautéing vegetables with a big pinch of salt.
- Add the chopped squash and an additional 3 Tablespoons of butter. Sauté the squash until it starts to sweat a bit, but don't let it brown. This should take around 10 minutes. Stir continuously to avoid the squash sticking to the pan.
- Sprinkle 1/4 cup of flour into the pan and coat the vegetables. Continue cooking the mixture for around 5 minutes.

- Add 6 cups of broth, then bring the soup to a boil and simmer it for 30-40 minutes.
- Remove the stock pot from the stove. With a potato masher, mash any large chunks of carrot and squash.
- Using an immersion blender, blend 2 cans of coconut milk into the soup. If you don't have an immersion blender, let the soup cool, then use a regular blender to incorporate the coconut milk.
- Return the soup to the stove and bring it back to a simmer.
- Once warmed, turn off the heat and serve the soup with a sprinkle of feta or goat cheese (optional) and some fresh cracked black pepper.



OPTIONAL TOPPINGS:

- feta or goat cheese crumbles
- lime juice
- sour cream
- drizzle of olive oil



VARIATIONS ON THIS RECIPE:

- Add 1 (1-inch) piece of minced ginger along with the curry paste, chili paste, and minced garlic in the second step.
- Add 1-2 roasted red peppers in the second step.
- Add 2-3 sliced apples along with the squash in the third step.
- Add red pepper flakes, to taste, after blending.
- Finish with maple syrup, to taste for sweetness.

REMBRANDT'S SUSTAINABILITY TIP:

"Squash is an excellent storage vegetable that grows in abundance during the autumn months and stores well through the winter. It lasts a long time before spoiling and, because of this, takes a long time before it goes to waste, which means this soup is an excellent way to eat fresh, homegrown, or locally grown vegetables all year round, even during the cold Michigan winters."