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# Naturally Nutritious Blog

HEALTH &amp; WELLNESS



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DIETITIAN- PARUL DESAI

## Savoring Squash

As the crisp fall air settles in, I find myself craving warm, hearty meals that bring the flavors of the season to life. For me, squash is one of those quintessential autumn ingredients that's not only comforting but incredibly versatile in the kitchen. Whether roasted, mashed, or pureed, squash brings a rich, earthy sweetness that pairs perfectly with the spices of the season. As the days grow shorter and the air turns crisp, there's nothing quite like the comforting aroma of simmering spices and roasted squash to make your home feel warm and inviting.

Squash, particularly butternut and acorn varieties, is not only delicious but also a nutritional powerhouse.

These brightly colored beauties are packed with essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Butternut squash is rich in beta-carotene, a precursor to vitamin A, which supports healthy vision and boosts immunity. Just one cup of cooked butternut squash contains over 450% of the recommended daily intake of vitamin A!

It's also an excellent source of vitamin C, which aids in tissue repair and immune function, and potassium, which helps regulate blood pressure. Low in calories and high in fiber, squash is the perfect ingredient for satisfying meals that keep you full without weighing you down.

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One of my favorite ways to enjoy butternut squash is in a creamy bisque, which combines the natural sweetness of squash and sweet potatoes with the warming spices of nutmeg and pumpkin pie spice. This recipe is both nutritious and indulgent, offering a velvety texture and a balance of savory and sweet flavors. Fresh ginger adds a subtle zing, while the blend of aromatic spices evokes the cozy feeling of autumn. The best part? It's surprisingly simple to make. In under an hour, you can transform these humble vegetables into a flavorful, comforting soup that's perfect for chilly evenings.

In addition to being delicious, this bisque is a fantastic way to incorporate more vegetables into your diet. Sweet potatoes contribute extra fiber and a boost of vitamins, while the ginger adds another layer of flavor and brings an array of potential health benefits. Using a base of low-sodium vegetable broth keeps the soup heart-healthy and full of flavor without excess sodium. If you want to add a little crunch and an extra layer of texture, I recommend garnishing with toasted pumpkin seeds. They add a nutty flavor and are packed with protein, healthy fats, and magnesium.

This Butternut Squash Bisque is perfect for meal prepping or serving at a family dinner, and it's sure to warm you from the inside out. With its balance of sweet and savory, creamy and crunchy, it's a true celebration of fall's bounty. Give it a try, and savor the flavors of the season with every spoonful.





# BUTTERNUT SQUASH BISQUE

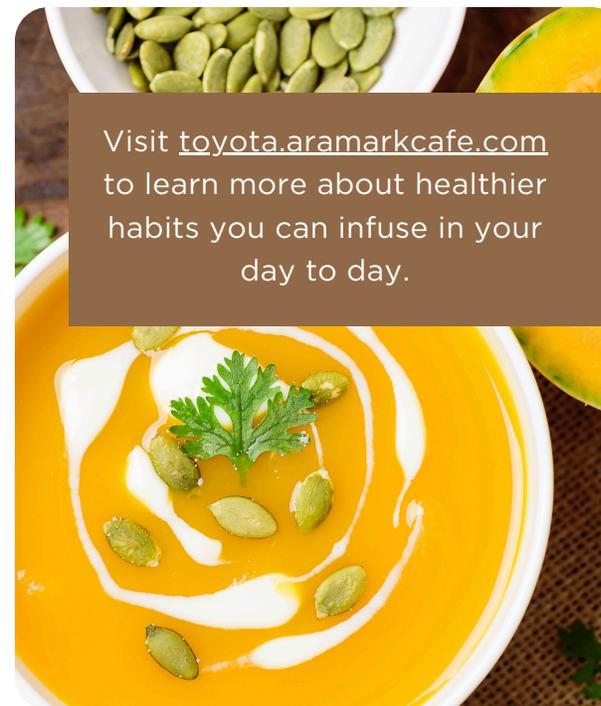
## Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cup butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and diced
- 1 tsp pumpkin pie spice
- 1 ½ tsp kosher salt
- ¼ tsp ground black pepper
- ⅛ tsp ground nutmeg
- ⅛ tsp thyme
- Pumpkin seeds (optional)
- 1 ⅓ Tbsp olive or vegetable oil
- ½ cup yellow onion, diced
- ½ cup celery, finely sliced
- ¼ cup carrot, shredded
- 2 Tbsp ginger root, peeled and minced
- 6 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 ½ cup sweet potatoes, peeled and diced

## Instructions:

1. In a stockpot over medium-high heat, heat oil. Add onion, celery, carrot, and ginger root. Sauté until the onion is translucent, 3 to 5 minutes.
2. Add remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat. Simmer until squash is tender, about 20 to 25 minutes.
3. In a blender, process soup on medium speed until smooth, 3 to 5 minutes.
4. Strain through a fine strainer for an ultra-smooth texture.
5. Garnish with pumpkin seeds if desired, and serve hot.

Note: Since everyone's health history and nutritional needs are so different, please make sure that you talk with your doctor and a registered dietitian to get advice about the diet and exercise plan that's right for you.



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## Recipe Notes:

This bisque is wonderfully versatile, and you can easily adapt it to suit your taste. For a slightly sweeter flavor, you can increase the amount of sweet potatoes or even add a touch of maple syrup. If you like a bit of heat, try adding a pinch of cayenne or red pepper flakes. I love serving this bisque with a slice of crusty whole-grain bread or topping it with a dollop of Greek yogurt for extra creaminess.

In summary, squash is not only delicious but a nutrient-packed ingredient that brings warmth and nourishment to your meals. Whether you're enjoying this creamy bisque or experimenting with other squash recipes, it's a wonderful way to embrace fall's natural bounty.

*Parul*

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