

This soup has fall colors, fall flavors, and even "fallen leaves" by way of garnish

Its apple-sage and squash-allspice flavor combinations may well have thoughts of Thanksgiving dancing in your head. Full-flavored and silky -- but without cream -- it's elegant enough to be served as the first course of a dinner party, but hearty enough for a soup and salad supper on a busy weekday night. Serves 6 to 8

Ingredients

- 2 1/2 pounds (2 medium) butternut squash, halved, seeds and strings scooped out
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 cup finely chopped yellow onion
- 1 small tart apple, such as Granny Smith, cored and chopped
- 4 1/2 cups chicken stock or reduced-sodium canned chicken broth, preferably organic
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh sage
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon ground allspice
- 20 crisp fried sage leaves as garnish, optional

Directions

1. Position a rack in the middle of the oven and preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. For easier cleanup, line a half-sheet pan with parchment paper or foil. Brush the squash halves all over with the oil and lay them cut side down on the prepared pan. Bake until tender when pierced with a knife, about 50 minutes. Remove from the oven. When cool enough to handle, scoop the flesh out of the peels and roughly chop it.
3. In a medium pot over moderate heat, melt the butter. Add the onion and apple, partially cover, and cook, stirring once or twice, for 10 minutes. Add the stock, chopped sage, 1/2 teaspoon of salt, 1/2 teaspoon of pepper, and the allspice and begin to simmer. Partially cover and cook, stirring occasionally, for 30 minutes. Add the squash and simmer uncovered, stirring once or twice, until the squash is very tender, about 10 minutes.
4. Cool slightly, then in a food processor or blender, puree the soup until smooth. The soup can be prepared up to 3 days in advance. Cool, cover, and refrigerate.
5. To serve, rewarm the soup over low heat, stirring often, until steaming. Adjust the seasoning. Ladle into bowls, garnish with fried sage leaves if you are using them, and serve immediately.

From [Great Get-Togethers](#) by Anna Post and Lizzie Post