

Caprial's Fall Squash Soup with Chorizo and Spicy Cinnamon Croutons

Serves 6 to 8

1 medium butternut, Hubbard, sweetmeat or other fall squash, peeled, seeded and cut into large dice
2 tablespoons olive oil, plus 1 teaspoon
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
2 large onions, cut into large dice
6 cloves garlic
1 cup marsala or dry sherry
8 cups chicken stock
1 pound chorizo
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon cayenne sauce
2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
2 teaspoons chopped fresh oregano
salt
freshly ground black pepper
Spicy cinnamon croutons (separate recipe)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place the squash on a roasting pan, toss it to coat with 2 tablespoons olive oil and bake until tender and slightly caramelized, 25 to 30 minutes.

Heat the butter in a large stockpot over medium-high heat until hot. Add the onions and sauté until tender and browned. Add the garlic, roasted squash and marsala and cook over high heat until reduced by one-half. Add the stock, bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low and simmer 10 to 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat the remaining teaspoon of olive oil in a sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add the chorizo; cook until it is well-browned and then drain the fat well.

Strain the squash and stock mixture through a fine sieve. Puree the solids and return the puree to the stockpot. Stir in the chorizo, Worcestershire, cayenne sauce, thyme and oregano; season to taste with salt and pepper.

To serve, ladle the soup into individual soup bowls and garnish with the spicy cinnamon croutons.

Spicy Cinnamon Croutons

Makes 4 cups

¼ cup butter
1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
1 teaspoon chile powder
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 baguette or loaf of sourdough bread cut into ¼ -inch cubes

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Melt butter in a sauté pan over medium heat. Stir in the brown sugar, chile powder and cinnamon and cook 2 to 3 minutes, or until bubbly. Transfer to a large bowl. Add the bread and toss to evenly coat. Spread the croutons on a sheet pan and bake until crispy and caramelized, 25 to 30 minutes. Remove the croutons from the oven and cool on a wire rack. (Don't worry if they stick together – they will break apart when cooled.)