

BLACK BEAN AND BUTTERNUT SQUASH STEW

Ingredients:

2 x 400g tins black beans, drained and rinsed in a sieve.
About 850g butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and cut into bite sized chunks.
2 medium onions
1 medium-hot green or red chili (deseed for less heat if preferred) sliced
2 tsp sugar
2 tbsp molasses
2 tbsp English mustard
400g tin chopped tomatoes
1 tbsp cocoa or cacao powder
1 garlic bulb, halved crossways
2 bay leaves
A couple of sprigs of thyme
1 litre hot vegetable stock
2 tbsp olive or rapeseed oil
Sea salt and black pepper

Method:

Heat oil in a large flameproof casserole, add onions and chili with some salt and pepper and fry gently till soft. Take pan off the heat and add sugar, molasses, and mustard, stirring well for form a thick paste.

Add the chunks of squash to the onion mixture and pour on the hot stock.

Add the tinned tomatoes with their juice. Add the cocoa, garlic, bay leaves and thyme. Return pan to the heat, bring to the boil, then reduce heat to simmer for 30 – 40 minutes, uncovered till squash is tender.

When squash is cooked, add the beans to the stew. Simmer the stew for a few more minutes to ensure everything is piping hot. Season to taste and serve.

Serves 4-6

Adapted from Much More Veg by Hugh Fearnley- Whittingstall

CARROT AND PARSNIP SOUP

Ingredients

1 onion peeled and chopped
2 tbsp olive oil
400g parsnips peeled and roughly chopped
400g carrots peeled and roughly chopped
1.0 litres / 2 pts chicken or vegetable stock
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
1 teaspoon of chopped fresh chives

Method

Heat the olive oil in a large pan and sauté the onion in the olive oil for 10 minutes or until translucent, stirring occasionally

Add the parsnips and carrots and cook for 5 minutes

Stir in stock and season well

Bring to the boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 35-45 minutes, until the vegetables are tender

Remove from the heat and leave for 5 minutes, then blitz the soup in a blender or food processor or with a hand blender.

Return the soup to a pan and check the seasoning and reheat gently. Ladle into bowls and scatter with chopped chives. Serve immediately.

Alternatives

Why not try **Carrot and coriander** soup – use the recipe as above but substitute a large potato for the parsnips and add 1 tsp of ground coriander when frying the onion. Finish the dish with chopped fresh coriander instead of the chives.

Or **Carrot and ginger** use the recipe as above, but substitute a large potato for the parsnips and add 1 inch of grated ginger and a pinch of nutmeg when frying the onion. Finish the dish with a swirl of plain yoghurt or crème fraiche.