

Pumpkin Soup with Brie Croutons

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Servings: 8

*1 large Granny Smith apple
2 tablespoons butter
1 container (8 ounce) fresh yellow onions, pre diced
2 cans (15 ounce ea) pumpkin puree'
4 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth (or stock)
2 teaspoons Kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
2 cups half-and-half
1/2 cup pepitas (or pumpkin seeds)
1/2 cup maple syrup
FOR THE BRIE CROUTONS
1 loaf bakery breakfast bread, sliced into 1/2-inch-thick slices
1 wedge (8 ounce) Brie cheese
3 tablespoons butter, softened
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves*

Prepare the soup: Peel the apple and remove the core. Cut into small cubes.

Preheat a large stockpot on medium heat for 1 to 2 minutes. Place the butter in the pot to melt. Add the apples and onions. Cook for 8 minutes, stirring occasionally, or until softened.

Add the pumpkin, chicken broth, salt, pepper, cinnamon and nutmeg. Stir to combine. Simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until hot. Remove from the heat. Stir in the half-and-half.

Add one-half of the soup mixture to a blender. Pulse on HIGH for 1 to 2 minutes until very smooth. Return the soup to the pot. Repeat with the remaining half of the soup. Return the pot to low heat to keep the soup warm. Serve with the Brie croutons, a drizzle of maple syrup and pepitas.

Prepare the croutons: Cut the bread into eight one-half-inch slices. Arrange four slices of bread on a cutting board. Thinly slice the Brie into 1/8-inch-thick slices. Arrange the cheese in a single layer over each slice of the bread, completely covering the surface. Top with the remaining four slices of bread. Spread butter on both outer-facing sides of the bread.

Preheat a large, nonstick saute' pan on medium-low heat for 2 to 3 minutes. Place the sandwiches in the pan. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes on each side or until golden brown and the cheese has melted.

Transfer to a cooling rack. Sprinkle evenly with sea salt and thyme leaves. Let stand for 2 minutes to cool.

Slice each sandwich into four strips. Serve in or alongside the pumpkin soup.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 125 Calories; 7g Fat (51.0% calories from fat); trace Protein; 16g Carbohydrate; 1g Dietary Fiber; 19mg Cholesterol; 663mg Sodium. Exchanges: 0 Grain(Starch); 0 Fruit; 1 1/2 Fat; 1 Other Carbohydrates.