

NACHO SQUASH SOUP

This soup is a fine way to use some of the squash that seasonally overflow your garden or your local market. It combines calabacitas (Spanish for squash) with other Southwestern ingredients, cheese, chile, and chorizo, to make one fine New Mexico style pottage. The chorizo and chiles open the taste buds to the extent that it is sad to stop when the bowl is empty.

But feel free to play with different cheeses that you like. Velveeta[®], used here, gives it a great texture, but others might like to try goat cheese for a fancier approach.

If you are one who embraces further piquancy, consider adding a little Taubasco sauce¹ into it, as its smokiness especially perks the soup up yet another notch. If you have guests who eschew it, you may just pass around Taubasco for those who wish it.

- 1 small onion, diced
- 1 tsp garlic purée
- 4 oz soyrizo (soy chorizo²) or cho-ritz-o³
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 2 corn tortillas
- 1 cup fat free half and half cream
- 2 cups canned nacho cheese sauce, or 1 cup RO*TEL[®] tomatoes and green chile, with one cup Velveeta[®] cheese, melted in
- 1 acorn squash, cooked and peeled, in ½" dice

In a 3 quart pan, sauté the soyrizo or cho-ritz-o, onions, and garlic until onions are limp. Add chicken broth, break up tortillas in bits, and add them to the pot. Raise the temperature to a light simmer and stir until the tortillas melt. Add cream, nacho sauce and acorn

¹Taubasco Sauce, page 270.

²Oddly enough, soyrizo is not a trademark, but is made by a number of companies.

³Cho-Ritz-O, page 37.

squash. Simmer for 5 minutes. Then, remove from heat and process the soup with a stick blender until a smooth soup results.

Serve with corn chips.

GINGER BEEF NOODLE SOUP ¶

The use of shiratake noodles as the lower G. I. pasta and the addition of lime zest and ginger to the broth of this dish intimate of Asian style. Bring out your Chinese spoons! Refrain from slurping, please.

- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 lb flank steak, sliced
- "salt" and pepper, to taste
- 1 small onion, diced
- 8 cups low-sodium chicken broth or homemade⁴
- 1 tsp ginger paste
- ½ lime rind, juice squeezed out
- 1 (8-oz) package lower G. I. noodles
- 5 scallions, chopped
- 2 tbsp low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tbsp lime juice
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves

Pat the steak dry on paper towels and slice it into bite-sized pieces. Apply "salt" and pepper, to taste. Put the olive oil in a soup pot, bring up the heat to medium-hot, add the meat, and sauté until the meat has browned. Add the onion and continue to cook until the onion has softened and is just beginning to brown.

Add the broth, ginger, and lime rind. Bring the pot to a simmer and hold it there for about 15 minutes, or until the meat is tender.

Prepare the lower G. I. noodles according to the package instruction: wash them, blanch them in boiling water a few minutes, drain and dry them, and cut them to the desired length.

⁴Homemade Consommè, page 69.

Remove the lime from the pot with a slotted spoon, add the noodles, and simmer for about another 3 minutes. Remove from the heat, stir in scallions, soy sauce, and lime juice. Ladle meat, noodles, and broth into serving bowls and garnish with cilantro leaves.

Serves 4.