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Cooking with the Club



with Chef Robert Larios



PUMPKINS: PRETTY PLEASING AS SOUP

When I mentioned that I was making pumpkin soup, it was common to get a cringing reaction from people. I have a feeling that they all envisioned in their minds their decoratively carved but withered pumpkins that they had placed at their homes, simmering in a stew pot. The reality is that pumpkin soup can be quite flavorful while simple to make.

There are three methods I have used when making pumpkin soup. And in preserving the concept of keeping *Cooking With the Club* recipes simple but packed with delicious flavor, I've decided to go with the recipe that takes a moderate time to prepare, but not so much that you have to put up a tent in the kitchen for your dish to finish cooking.

Instead of roasting a pumpkin and then taking the flesh into a mixer, I've skipped that step and just bought a can of mashed, unsweetened pumpkin. Remember, I'm keeping it simple, although if there are pros out there, feel free to prepare the pumpkin in the roasted pumpkin method, since you'll be able to get the highest quality of flavors this way.

I'm sure that you will agree that the recipe below very closely matches the tremendous taste of roasted pumpkin soup.

Perfect Pumpkin Soup

Serves 2 to 4

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 medium size pumpkin
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Parsley
- 1 clove of garlic
- 1 medium size scallion or 1/4 cup red onion
- 1 can (15 oz.) mashed pumpkin
- 1 pint of half and half milk
- 1/4 cup of green chives
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

DIRECTIONS:



3 Gut the pumpkin seeds and the rest of the inside material.



7 While stirring, slowly add the pint of the half and half milk to the pumpkin.



1 Select a medium-size pumpkin for use as a decorative soup bowl.



2 Cut the pumpkin toward the stem side so that you can later use the cut piece as a lid.



4 Place the cleaned pumpkin on a baking sheet and put in the oven on broil for about 10 minutes or until the inside of the pumpkin has dried out.



5 Open the can of mashed pumpkin and place the contents in a bowl. Add the parsley, pepper and salt.



6 In a sauce pan on medium heat, sauté the diced scallions and minced garlic in the olive oil until slightly brown, and then add the pumpkin from the can. Stir.



8 Add soup to the medium-sized pumpkin that was hollowed out; sprinkle finely chopped chives over the soup, and place the lid on the pumpkin to keep it warm.



9 Enjoy, and Happy Thanksgiving!

