

Squash Soup

- ~3 lbs of winter squash, kabocha or buttercup preferred, mix is fine
 - olive oil (or bacon fat)
 - 2 large yellow onions, sliced thin
 - 2 carrots cut into fine strips (julienne preferred though not required)
 - 1 tbsp sugar (white, brown or maple are all fine)
 - 1/2 tsp ground sage
 - 4 cups chicken or vegetable broth or stock
 - bacon (optional)
 - Gruyere cheese (optional[smoked is preferred])
 - Salt and pepper to taste
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- Cut squash(es) in half, scoop out seeds and bake until cut surface slightly caramelized and flesh is fork tender. Cool and then scrape out the flesh from the skin.
 - While squash is baking heat fat in soup pot, over medium heat and add the onions and carrots, cook, stirring often, until soft (~15 minutes). Sprinkle with sugar and continue to cook and stir for another 10-15 minutes or until caramelized.
 - Add sage, stock and squash and bring to a boil. Let cool slightly and then either blender it in batches or use an immersion blender to puree it until smooth and then add salt and pepper to taste. If desired serve with crumbled bacon and grated Gruyere to garnish.

For a vegan option use vegetable broth instead of chicken. Skip the cheese and either add a small amount of liquid smoke, or smoked maple syrup, or garnish with bacobits for the slightly smoky taste the bacon and cheese add to the original recipe.