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MARCH

This soup is like Thanksgiving in a bowl. The slightly chunky texture of the hash garnish contrasts delightfully with the creamy soup, and the mix of colors makes for a beautiful presentation. It's okay to substitute canned pumpkin, but be certain you buy one that lists only one ingredient: pumpkin. If you have hash left over, serve it with a poached egg for breakfast or over roast pork for another weeknight dinner.

SWEET POTATO-PUMPKIN SOUP WITH BRUSSELS SPROUT HASH

serves 4-6

2 sweet potatoes (about 1 1/4 lb/625 g total weight), peeled and cut into 1-inch (2.5-cm) pieces

1 small pumpkin (about 2 1/2 lb/1.25 kg), peeled, seeded, and cut into 1-inch (2.5-cm) pieces

6 Tbsp (3 fl oz/90 ml) olive oil

Salt and freshly ground pepper

1 yellow onion, chopped

1/2 tsp ground nutmeg

4 cups (32 fl oz/1 l) chicken broth

FOR THE BRUSSELS SPROUT-PANCETTA HASH

1/4 lb (125 g) pancetta, diced

1 large shallot, halved and thinly sliced

1/2 lb (170 g) Brussels sprouts, cut into 1/4-inch (6-mm) pieces

1 Tbsp olive oil

Salt and freshly ground pepper

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Pile the sweet potatoes and pumpkin on the prepared baking sheet and toss with 4 Tbsp (2 fl oz/60 ml) of the oil. Spread in a single layer and season generously with salt and pepper. Roast, stirring once, until the vegetables are golden, about 30 minutes. Set aside.

In a large, heavy pot, warm the remaining 2 Tbsp oil over medium-high heat. Add the onion, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring occasionally, until translucent, about 6 minutes. Stir in the nutmeg and toast for 1 minute. Add the sweet potatoes, pumpkin, and broth and stir to combine. Let cool slightly.

Working in batches, purée the soup in a food processor or blender. Return to the pot and place over high heat. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low, and simmer for 15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper and keep warm over low heat.

To make the Brussels sprout-pancetta hash, in a frying pan, cook the pancetta over medium heat, stirring frequently, until most of the fat is rendered, about 4 minutes (it will not be fully cooked). »»

Stir in the shallot and raise the heat to medium-high. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the shallot is soft and beginning to turn golden, about 4 minutes. Add the Brussels sprouts and oil, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring frequently, until the sprouts are fork-tender, about 6 minutes.

Serve the soup, topped with the hash.

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MARCH

A creamy vegetable soup is a hallmark of home cooking. Here, cauliflower is simmered with potato and milk and then puréed to a smooth, velvety texture. To make the soup even creamier, use a mixture of cream and milk.

CAULIFLOWER SOUP WITH CHERVIL

serves 6

1 small head cauliflower (about 3/4 lb/375 g), coarsely chopped (including core)

1 boiling potato (about 1/2 lb/250 g), peeled and diced

3 1/4-3 1/2 cups (26-28 fl oz/810-875 ml) milk

Salt and ground white pepper

2 Tbsp unsalted butter

1/4 tsp grated nutmeg

1/4 cup (1/2 oz/10 g) chervil or flat-leaf parsley leaves

Bring a large saucepan of water to a boil over medium-high heat. Add the cauliflower and potato, reduce the heat to medium, and cook until the vegetables soften slightly, about 5 minutes. Drain well and return to the pan. Add 2 1/2 cups (20 fl oz/625 ml) of the milk and 1/2 tsp salt and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to medium, cover, and cook until the cauliflower and potato are tender, 15-20 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool slightly.

Working in batches, purée the soup in a blender or food processor, adding the remaining milk as needed to reach the desired creamy consistency. Transfer to a clean saucepan and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Stir in the butter, the nutmeg, and 1/4 tsp pepper. Serve, garnished with the chervil.