

Curried Pumpkin Soup (submitted by Kathy Beeson)

2 medium onions, finely chopped (2 cups)
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 large garlic cloves, minced
1 1/2 tablespoons minced peeled fresh ginger
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1/8 teaspoon ground cardamom
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
3/4 teaspoon dried hot red pepper flakes
2 (15-oz) cans solid-pack pumpkin (3 1/2 cups; not pie filling)
4 cups water
2 (12 oz) cans reduced-sodium chicken broth
1 (14-oz) can unsweetened coconut milk (not low-fat)
1/4 cup olive oil
2 teaspoons brown mustard seeds
8 fresh curry leaves

Cook onions in butter in a wide 6-quart heavy pot over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally, until softened, 3 to 5 minutes. Add garlic and ginger and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Add cumin, coriander, and cardamom and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Stir in salt, red pepper flakes, pumpkin, water, broth, and coconut milk and simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, 30 minutes. Purée soup in batches in a blender until smooth (use caution when blending hot liquids), transferring to a large bowl, and return soup to pot. Keep soup warm over low heat.

Heat oil in a small heavy skillet over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking, then cook mustard seeds until they begin to pop, about 15 seconds. Add curry leaves and cook 5 seconds, then pour mixture into pumpkin soup. Stir until combined well and season soup with salt. Soup can be thinned with additional water.

Cooks' note:

Soup can be made 1 day ahead and cooled completely, uncovered, then chilled, covered.

Makes 10 to 12 servings.

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I used 1/2 teaspoon of curry powder instead of the curry leaves and 1/4 teaspoon of chili powder instead of the red pepper flakes.

Kathy