

Butternut Squash Bread Soup (a Panade)

Makes 8 Servings

This yummy butternut squash bread soup recipe from David Lebovitz's cookbook, My Paris Kitchen is basically grilled cheese in a bowl, also known as panade de butternut. Panade means a thick bread and stock soup or stew.



3 tablespoons unsalted butter
3 tablespoons olive oil
4 onions, peeled and sliced
4 cloves garlic, peeled; 2 thinly sliced, and 2 whole
2 tablespoons chopped sage
2 tablespoons chopped thyme
2 loaves firm-textured sourdough bread, sliced
1/2 cup white wine
2 butternut squash or similar winter squash

(such as Kabocha), peeled and sliced into 1/8-inch slices
sea salt or kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 cups grated fontina cheese, or Comte or Gruyere, Jarlsberg, or combination
2 quarts warm chicken stock, plus additional stock for serving
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

1. Melt the butter with the olive oil in a wide skillet or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the onions, the 2 cloves of sliced garlic, and 1 teaspoon of the herbs. Cook for about 35 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the onions are completely wilted and beginning to brown on the bottom and edges.
2. While the onions are cooking, preheat the oven to 375°F. Place slices of bread on baking sheets in a single layer and toast in the oven, turning the slices over midway, until both sides are dry, 10 to 12 minutes. Remove from the oven and when cool enough to handle, rub both sides of the slices with the whole garlic cloves.
3. When the onions are done, pour in the wine, scraping the bottom of the pan to loosen up any of the flavorful brown bits. Cook for a minute or two, so the wine is absorbed. Add 2 cups of chicken stock to the onions and cook until the stock is mostly absorbed, 10 to 15 minutes, and then add the rest of the stock and heat until the stock is hot. Remove from the heat.
4. To assemble the panade, cover the bottom of a 3- to 4-quart baking dish with a layer of bread, breaking any pieces so they fit in a single later, but keeping them as large as possible. Ladle about half of the onions and some of the stock over the bread, and then cover with half of the squash slices. Season lightly with salt, pepper, and half of the herbs. Sprinkle with 1/2 cup of the grated cheese. Add a second layer of bread and ladle the rest of the onions and more stock over the bread. Cover with the remaining squash slices. Season the squash with salt and pepper, and then add the remaining herbs. Sprinkle another 1/2 cup of grated cheese over the squash layer. Cover the squash with a final layer of bread and then ladle the rest of the stock over the bread and press down on the ingredients to encourage them to meld together. Top with the remaining 1 cup of grated cheese, and the Parmesan.
5. Cover the baking dish with aluminum foil and tighten it around the edges, but don't press it down on the surface or some of the cheese may stick to it during baking. Set the baking dish on a foil-lined baking sheet to catch any spills. Bake for 45 minutes, then uncover the panade, and bake for another 30 minutes, or until the panade is very well browned and crisp on top. Let cool for about 15 minutes and then spoon portions of the panade into soup bowls, making sure everyone gets a highly prized layer of the crusty topping. Ladle additional stock around the bowls of panade, if you wish, and serve.