

CURRIED SWEET POTATO AND MILLET SOUP

BY JUDITH FINLAYSON

This soup is a lovely combination of flavours and texture. It has a mild curry taste, enhanced with the addition of orange and a hint of sweetness from the maple syrup. The toasted walnuts add taste and an appealing bit of crunch, while the optional yogurt provides a creamy finish. Although this is a great cold weather soup, it's light enough to be enjoyed any time of the year – perhaps even for dinner with the addition of salad and some whole-grain bread.

6 servings

1 tbsp	vegetable oil
2	onions, finely chopped
2	carrots, peeled and diced
2	stalks celery, diced
2	cloves garlic, minced
2 tsp	minced gingerroot
2 tsp	curry powder
1 tsp	freshly grated orange zest
2 cups	sweet potato purée (see Tips)
6 cups	reduced-sodium chicken stock
3/4 cup	millet, toasted (see Tips)
1 cup	freshly squeezed orange juice
1/4 cup	pure maple syrup
	Salt and freshly ground black pepper
	Toasted chopped walnuts or sliced almonds
	Plain yogurt, optional

In a large saucepan or stockpot, heat oil over medium heat for 30 seconds. Add onions, carrots and celery and cook, stirring, until carrots have softened, about 7 minutes.

Add garlic, ginger, curry powder and orange zest and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add sweet potato and stock and stir well. Bring to a boil. Stir in millet. Reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer until millet is tender and flavors have blended, about 30 minutes.

Add orange juice and maple syrup and heat through. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Ladle into bowls and garnish with toasted walnuts and a drizzle of yogurt, if using.

Variation Curried Sweet Potato and Quinoa Soup: Substitute an equal quantity of quinoa for the millet. Do not toast it, but rinse thoroughly before adding to the soup.

Tips

To get this quantity of puréed sweet potato, bake, peel and mash 2 medium sweet potatoes, each about 6 oz. You can also use a can (14 oz/398 ml) of sweet potato purée.

While it's not necessary to toast millet, toasting does bring out its pleasantly nutty flavor. To toast millet, heat in a dry skillet over medium heat, stirring constantly, until it crackles and releases its aroma, about 5 minutes.

