

# Beautiful *butternut squash*



**R**ich in antioxidants, Vitamins A, C, B1, B6, folic acid, manganese, magnesium, potassium and fibre, butternut squash also contains moderate amounts of calcium, copper and iron. Regular consumption of the gourd can help lower your blood pressure, prevent birth defects, strengthen the immune system, prevent memory loss, and lower your risk for colon cancer, heart disease, liver disease and stroke. And organically grown butternut squash has 27% more vitamin C than its conventionally grown counterpart.

The peak season for butternut squash is from late September to early December. Choose one that is heavy, with no blemishes or moldy spots, and the skin should feel very “firm.” To enhance its sweet flavour, try pairing it with any of the following: cinnamon, maple syrup, brown sugar, butter, orange zest, nutmeg, ginger or cloves. Bon appétit!

## Chef Craig Flinn

**C**hef Craig Flinn has incorporated organic products into his recipes since day one.

“My prime goal was to source out the best ingredients in Nova Scotia,” he says, on the phone while weeding his parents’ butternut squash garden. For Flinn, owner and head

chef of Chives Canadian Bistro on Barrington Street, buying organic is a decision based on quality and ethics. “The flavour profile of a lot of organic vegetables is just much better than the stuff that comes from other parts of the world,” he says. “I like the principles of organic growing. I like the idea of knowing where my food comes from.”



## Organic Butternut Squash Soup

This is an extremely simple soup but the trick to making it wonderful is to use a blender, not a food processor at the end. The cream is optional but it gives a velvety mouth feel and makes for a special treat. A drizzle of maple syrup over the top is a nice garnish but I prefer some sliced chives or fresh sage.

- 1 medium butternut squash
- 1 medium onion
- 1 stalk celery
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1 bouquet garnis (herb bundle of thyme, sage, and bay leaves)
- 3 tbsps olive oil
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 4 litres chicken or vegetable stock
- 2 cups heavy cream
- salt and pepper to taste

Peel, seed, and roughly dice the squash. Chop the onions, celery, and garlic roughly and sauté them in the oil and butter for 10 minutes over medium-high heat until slightly brown in colour. Add the squash and white wine. Cover with the stock and place herb bundle on top just under the level of the liquid. Simmer until squash begins to fall apart (about 45 minutes).

To use the blender while the soup is hot you must remove the vent cap at the top and cover loosely with a towel. Hot soup will erupt out of the top if the seal is too tight. Puree soup well, adjust with seasoning, and place back into the pot. Add the cream and heat once more before serving.

Visit Planet Organic Market to find all the fresh ingredients you need to make this delicious recipe.

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