

# Acorn Squash Soup

Prep: 25 mins

Cook: 70 mins

Total: 95 mins

Servings: 4 servings

Yield: 8 cups

This richly flavored creamy acorn squash soup is the poster child for fall cooking. In fact, it doesn't feel like fall to me until I've had a giant bowl of the stuff. My favorite part of making this soup is deciding what toppings to add, from crunchy fried shallots to cheesy croutons.

## The Ingredients for Acorn Squash Soup

This acorn squash soup is completely plant-based but gets its creamy texture and rich flavor from the dense flesh of the acorn squash and a Honeycrisp apple roasted alongside. Garlic, shallots, and fresh ginger add a savory flavor base, and apple cider vinegar and maple syrup provide just a touch of acidity and sweetness to round out the flavors.

## How To Make Acorn Squash Soup

Because acorn squash is tricky (if not impossible) to peel when raw, in this recipe you'll roast the squash with the skin on and then scoop out the flesh. While the squash roasts, you'll make a small batch of fried shallots for the topping and sauté the aromatics (shallot, garlic, and ginger) in the shallot-infused oil.

Once the squash is tender, you'll add it to the pot along with vegetable broth. After simmering to meld the flavors, everything goes into the blender until silky smooth. At the very last minute, stir in a little cider vinegar and maple syrup and adjust the flavor with more salt and pepper, to taste.

## Do You Leave the Skin on Squash for Soup?

Because winter squashes tend to have tough skin, it is generally removed when making soup. Acorn squash skin can be very tricky to remove because of its ridged shape. In this recipe, the squash is halved and roasted with the skin on. After roasting, the skins can be easily removed by peeling them off, or you can use a spoon to scoop out the tender flesh.

## Tips for Making Acorn Squash Soup

- Watch the shallots carefully—The shallots can go from golden brown to burnt very quickly, so don't step away from the Dutch oven while making them and have the paper towel-lined plate ready beforehand.
- Use caution when blending—Blending hot soup can be dangerous, so make sure to follow the directions, removing the blender lid's central vent and placing a kitchen towel over the blender lid before turning on the blender. You can also use a hand blender to blend this soup, though it won't turn out quite as smooth.
- How to cut acorn squash for soup—Acorn squashes are very hard and strangely-shaped. To make the squash easier to cut, cut off a thin piece from the stem end, then stand the squash up on the cut side and cut it in half. This prevents it from rolling around on the cutting board.

## Serving Acorn Squash Soup

You can serve this soup plain Jane, with no toppings, or top with fried shallots and/or cheesy croutons. Other great soup toppers include a drizzle of cream or coconut cream, extra-virgin olive oil, fried sage leaves, and toasted pumpkin seeds.

## Make Ahead

You can roast the squash and apple up to one day in advance. Keep refrigerated in an airtight container until ready to use.

## Ingredients

- 6 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon olive oil, divided
- 3 medium (about 1 pound 6 ounces each) acorn squash, halved and seeded
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon fine salt, divided
- 1 large (7 ounces) Honeycrisp apple, roughly chopped (about 2 cups)
- 2 large shallots (about 2 ounces each)
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 (1 1/2-inch) piece fresh ginger, peeled and chopped
- 4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons pure maple syrup

## Cheesy Croutons (Optional)

- 1 cup cubed sourdough bread
- 2 tablespoons pre-grated parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon fine salt

## Steps to Make It

1. Gather the ingredients. Preheat the oven to 425 F with racks in the center and lower third positions. Line 1 large rimmed and 1 small rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Brush 2 tablespoons olive oil over 3 medium (about 1 pound 6 ounces each) acorn squash, halved and seeded and sprinkle evenly with 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper and 1/2 teaspoon fine salt. Place, cut-side down, on the large rimmed baking sheet. Bake on the center rack until tender, about 40 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, toss 1 large (7-ounce) Honeycrisp apple, roughly chopped (about 2 cups) with 1 teaspoon olive oil and spread into an even layer on the small baking sheet. Bake until caramelized on the bottom and very tender, 25 to 30 minutes.
4. While the squash and apple are baking, roughly chop 1 large shallot and transfer to a small bowl. Thinly slice the remaining 1 large shallot crosswise into thin rings (about 1/16-inch thick). Set aside.
5. Heat the remaining 1/4 cup olive oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-low. Add the thinly sliced shallots. Cook, stirring often, until the shallots are crispy and golden, about 5 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the shallots to a large plate lined with a paper towel and set aside. Remove the pot from the heat, but do not discard the oil.
6. Once the squash is tender, remove from the oven and scoop out the flesh directly onto the sheet pan. Discard the squash skins.
7. Return the Dutch oven with the shallot-infused oil to medium heat and stir in the reserved roughly chopped shallots, 3 garlic cloves, chopped, and 1 (1 1/2-inch) piece fresh ginger, peeled and chopped. Cook, stirring often, until tender and aromatic, about 4 minutes.
8. Add the squash, roasted apple, and remaining 1/2 teaspoon fine salt to the Dutch oven along with 4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high, then reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer, uncovered, until the flavors meld, about 20 minutes.
9. Carefully pour the mixture into a blender. Secure the lid and remove the center piece to allow steam to escape. Place a clean towel over the opening. Blend until thickened and smooth, about 1 minute.
10. Return the mixture to the Dutch oven and stir in 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar and 1 1/2 teaspoons pure maple syrup.
11. Divide the soup evenly among 4 bowls and top with the reserved fried shallots and optional croutons, if making.

## Cheesy Croutons (Optional)

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F. Line a small rimmed baking sheet with foil.
2. Toss 1 cup cubed sourdough bread with 2 tablespoons pre-grated parmesan cheese, 2 tablespoons olive oil, 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper, and 1/4 teaspoon fine salt in a large bowl until well coated. Transfer to the prepared baking sheet and spread into an even layer.
3. Bake until toasted, stirring occasionally, about 20 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool until ready to use.

## How to Store or Freeze

Let the soup come to room temperature and store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or the freezer for up to 3 months.

Thaw frozen soup in the refrigerator overnight, then reheat in a saucepan over medium heat, stirring often. You may need to add a splash of water or vegetable broth to thin the soup out a bit.