



WATERCREST



The Chef's Corner

The Beauty of Butternut Squash

Butternut squash is a type of winter squash that grows on a vine; its skin is tan-yellow and fleshy pulp is bright orange. It is shaped almost like an elongated pear. Botanically a fruit, butternut squash is used culinarily as a vegetable that can be sauteed, roasted, pureed for soup or mashed. Like pumpkins and zucchini, butternut squash is a member of the cucurbitaceae family. In Australia and New Zealand, this variety is known as butternut pumpkin or gramma.

The name "squash" derives from the Narragansett *askutasquash*, meaning "eaten raw or uncooked." While American native peoples may have eaten some forms of squash raw, today most squash is enjoyed cooked. Butternut squash earned its name from its fairly mild, somewhat sweet nutty flavor, reminding some of a cross between sweet potato and carrot. It is a good source of Vitamins A and C, and provides magnesium, potassium and calcium.

From our Chef's Corner to your table, enjoy!

Chef's Recipe

Butternut Squash, Leek and Prosciutto Casserole

Ingredients:

- 2 large butternut squash
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 cups sliced leeks
- 3 cloves of garlic minced
- 2 tablespoons sage chopped
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup heavy cream
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup shredded parmesan cheese
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup julienned prosciutto
- Salt and Pepper to taste

Directions: Pre heat oven to 400.

Peel, seed and dice butternut squash into cubes. Lightly toss in olive oil, salt and pepper. Roast on a sheet tray in oven for 25-30 minutes or until soft.

Heat a large saute pan to med heat. Add butter, leeks, garlic, and sage. Saute until softened or golden brown. Stir occasionally 10-12 minutes, then set aside.

Remove butternut squash from oven once done. In a casserole dish put half of the leek mixture into casserole dish evenly spread. Add a layer of the butternut squash evenly on top. Add another layer of the leek mixture and top with more butternut squash. Pour heavy cream on top, sprinkle the prosciutto and then the parmesan cheese.

Bake in the oven at 375 uncovered for 25-30 minutes. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.