

Lamb & Butternut Squash Soup

with Spinach & Barley

Merguez sausage is a staple of North African, Middle Eastern and European cuisines. It's usually made with lamb and a blend of spices, bringing a hearty, warming flavor to the dishes it's used in. Normally, you'll find it wrapped up in sausage casing. But in this recipe, instead of using pre-made merguez sausages, you'll create your own by mixing the lamb with our custom spice blend—no casing required. Cooking the meat without it allows the flavors to infuse the butternut squash and barley. The soup's on, chefs!



Ingredients

- 6 Ounces Ground Lamb
- ½ Cup Pearled Barley
- 2 Cloves Garlic
- 2 Ounces Baby Spinach
- 1 Pound Butternut Squash
- 1 Yellow Onion
- 1 Bunch Parsley
- 1 Bunch Thyme

Knick Knacks

- 1 Fresh Bay Leaf
- ¼ Cup Grated Parmesan Cheese
- 1 Teaspoon Merguez Spice Blend
(Sweet Paprika, Fennel Seeds, Coriander, Cumin, Harissa, Cinnamon & Cayenne)

Makes 2 Servings

About 600 Calories Per Serving

Cooking Time: 25 to 35 minutes

1



Prepare the ingredients:

Wash and dry the fresh produce. Peel and mince the garlic. Roughly chop the spinach. Halve the butternut squash lengthwise; scoop out the seeds and pulp. Using a sturdy knife, peel the squash; discard the peel. Medium dice the squash. Peel and small dice the onion. Pick the parsley and thyme leaves off the stems; discard the stems. Keep the parsley leaves whole; roughly chop the thyme leaves. In a medium bowl, combine the **ground lamb** and **spice blend**.

2



Cook the lamb:

In a medium pot, heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the **seasoned lamb** and cook, frequently breaking the meat apart with a spoon, 2 to 3 minutes, or until browned and slightly crispy. Add the **onion** and **garlic**; season with salt and pepper. (If the pan seems dry, add an additional teaspoon of olive oil.) Cook, stirring occasionally, 2 to 3 minutes, or until the onion has softened and the garlic is fragrant.

3



Add the squash, herbs & barley:

Add the **squash, barley, bay leaf, thyme** and **3 cups of water** to the pot of lamb and vegetables. Season with salt and pepper. Heat the mixture to boiling on high. Once boiling, reduce the heat to medium. Simmer 14 to 16 minutes, or until the soup is slightly thickened and the barley is tender and cooked through. Remove from heat.

4



Finish the soup:

Using a fork, mash **about one-quarter of the cooked squash pieces** into the soup; stir to incorporate. Stir in the **spinach** and **half the Parmesan cheese**. Cook on medium, stirring frequently, 2 to 3 minutes, or until the spinach has wilted and the cheese is fully incorporated.

5



Plate your dish:

Remove and discard the bay leaf. Divide the soup between 2 bowls. Garnish with the **remaining Parmesan cheese** and **parsley leaves**. Enjoy!