

## **Pork and fennel meatball soup**

Prep time: 30 minutes | Cooking time: 50 minutes

Serves Four to six

### **INGREDIENTS**

For the soup

- \* 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- \* 1 onion, chopped
- \* 1 large celery stalk, chopped
- \* 1 carrot, peeled and chopped
- \* 2 large cloves of garlic, finely chopped
- \* 1 x 400g tin of plum tomatoes, chopped
- \* 2 tsp sugar
- \* 200ml cream (regular or double)
- \* 400-600ml chicken stock
- \* 150g spaghetti, broken into little bits

For the meatballs

- \* 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- \* 1 onion, finely chopped
- \* 1 large clove of garlic, crushed or finely grated
- \* 2 tsp fennel seeds, toasted and ground
- \* 450g minced pork
- \* 15g butter

To serve

- \* A couple of handfuls of finely grated parmesan
- \* 1 tbsp chopped parsley

**METHOD:**

\* Place the olive oil in a saucepan over a medium heat and add the onion, celery, carrot and garlic. Season, cover with a butter wrapper or a piece of parchment paper, and the saucepan lid, then turn the heat down to low and cook for about 10-12 minutes, until the vegetables are tender, stirring every few minutes to prevent them sticking.

\* Add the tomatoes and sugar, season again and cook over a medium to high heat, uncovered, for about 10 minutes, until the tomatoes are melted through the sauce. Add the cream and boil for three minutes, then take off the heat.

\* Blend until completely smooth, then put back into the saucepan and add as much stock as needed to reach the consistency you desire. Season to taste and set aside.

\* To make the meatballs, place two tablespoons of the olive oil in a saucepan and add the finely chopped onion and garlic. Season, then cook over a low heat, covered with a butter wrapper or a piece of parchment paper and the saucepan lid, until the onions are tender, for about 10 minutes. Take off the heat, tip the onions into a bowl and allow to cool.

\* While the onions are cooling, toast the fennel seeds in a dry frying pan over a medium to high heat. Crush them well, then add to the onions. Add the minced pork and mix well. Season, then pick off half a teaspoonful of the mixture and cook it in a frying pan with a little olive oil and taste to check for seasoning. Add more salt, pepper or ground fennel if necessary, then, when you're happy with the flavour, shape the meatballs. Make each one about 25g in weight (like a large walnut in its shell) – you should get about 20.

\* Place a large frying pan on a medium heat and add the remaining olive oil and the butter. Once the butter has melted and foamed, add the meatballs and cook, tossing regularly, for about eight to 10 minutes, until they are cooked through. Turn the heat down to low once they start to take on a golden hue.

\* While the meatballs are cooking, bring a saucepan of water to the boil, add a good pinch of salt, then add the broken spaghetti. Stir and allow to cook for six to eight minutes, until al dente, then drain.

\* To serve, bring the tomato soup to steaming point and stir in the cooked pasta. Divide among bowls, then top with the meatballs and scatter finely grated parmesan and chopped parsley over the top.

### **CURRIED BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP**

For the soup

2 tablespoons coconut oil

1 large onion or 2 medium (200g in weight), chopped

1 butternut squash (600g when peeled and deseeded), peeled, deseeded and cut into 1cm cubes

1 large clove of garlic, chopped

salt and freshly ground pepper

1 x 400ml tin of coconut milk

1 tablespoon curry powder

450ml vegetable or chicken stock

For the garnish

1 tablespoon coconut oil

2 tablespoons pumpkin seeds a pinch of curry powder a pinch of sea salt flakes

#### **METHOD**

Put the coconut oil into a saucepan over a medium heat. Add the chopped onions, butternut squash and garlic. Season with salt and pepper and stir to mix.

Turn the heat down to low, cover the vegetables with a piece of parchment paper and the saucepan lid, and allow to cook slowly for 10 minutes, stirring from time to time, until they are tender.

Meanwhile, pour the coconut milk into a bowl and whisk to remove any lumps. Remove the paper cover and lid from the pan and stir in the curry powder. Turn the heat up to high and cook, stirring, for a minute, until the curry powder is wonderfully fragrant. Now add the coconut milk and the stock and bring to a rolling boil, then blend the soup until gorgeously smooth.

To make the toasted pumpkin seeds, place a frying pan over a high heat and add the coconut oil. Allow to melt and heat up, then add the pumpkin seeds and curry powder. Toss over the heat for 1–2 minutes, until the seeds have toasted and darkened slightly, then place on a plate lined with kitchen paper and sprinkle with the sea salt flakes.

Serve the soup steaming hot, with the toasted pumpkin seeds scattered over the top.

### **PUMPKIN, CHEESE AND ROSEMARY SCONES**

**INGREDIENTS:** Deliciously savoury and gorgeously light in texture, these scones are great served with a big bowl of soup. You can use any squash instead of pumpkin, and, if you fancy, add lardons of crispy bacon or diced chorizo to the mix.

175g peeled and deseeded pumpkin (weight when peeled and deseeded)

1 tablespoon olive oil 200g plain flour

1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder

a pinch of cayenne pepper

2 teaspoons finely chopped rosemary 1/2 teaspoon salt 50g finely grated cheese (Cheddar or a hard cheese such as Parmesan)

1 egg 100ml milk, plus 1 tablespoon extra for brushing the top

**METHOD:** Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas 6.

Cut the pumpkin into 1–2cm chunks and place on a roasting tray. Drizzle with the olive oil and roast in the oven for about 20 minutes, until completely tender.

Tip the pumpkin into a bowl (leaving the oven on) and mash very well with a fork, or blend in a food processor, then allow to cool. If using canned pumpkin purée, you'll need 125g.

Sift the flour, baking powder and cayenne into a bowl and add in the rosemary, salt and all but 2 tablespoons of the grated cheese, reserving the remaining cheese for scattering over the scones before they go into the oven.

Whisk the egg and mix with the pumpkin purée and milk. Make a well in the centre of the dry ingredients and add the wet ingredients, then, with your hand in a claw shape, mix the two, making sure you don't knead but just mixing until it comes together.

Tip the mixture out on to a floured surface and tidy the sides, working it into a rough square and patting the dough out to 2cm thick. Brush a little milk over the top and scatter with the remaining cheese, then cut the dough into 3 x 3, to make 9 scones.

Place the scones on a baking tray and bake in the preheated oven for about 15 minutes, or until golden and cooked through. They should sound hollow when tapped on the base. Cool on a wire rack