

BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP WITH FONTINA CROSTINI

- 2 TABLESPOONS EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL
- 1 MEDIUM ONION, CHOPPED
- 1 CARROT, PEELED AND CUT INTO 1/2 IN. PIECES
- 3 CLOVES GARLIC, MINCED
- 3 1/2 POUNDS BUTTERNUT SQUASH, PEELED, SEEDED, AND CUT INTO 3/4 IN. PIECES
- 6 CUPS LOW SODIUM CHICK STOCK OR BROTH
- 1/4 CUP CHOPPED FRESH SAGE
- SALT AND PEPPER

FOR THE CROSTINI

- 1/2 WHOLE WHEAT BAGUETTE, SLICED DIAGONALLY INTO 1/2 INCH THICK SLICES
- EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL
- 2 TABLESPOONS CHOPPED FRESH SAGE
- 1 CUP GRATED FONTINA
- SALT

HEAT OIL IN AN 8-QUART STOCKPOT OVER MEDIUM-HIGH. ADD ONION AND CARROT AND COOK, STIRRING OCCASIONALLY, FOR 5 MINUTES OR UNTIL ONION IS SOFT. ADD GARLIC AND COOK FOR 30 SECONDS MORE OR UNTIL AROMATIC. ADD SQUASH AND STOCK OR BROTH AND BRING TO A BOIL. ADD SAGE AND CONTINUE BOILING FOR ABOUT 20 MINUTES OR UNTIL VEGETABLES ARE TENDER.

TURN OFF HEAT. USING AN IMMERSION BLENDER, BLEND THE MIXTURE UNTIL SMOOTH. (OR PUREE IN BATCHES IN A FOOD PROCESSOR OR BLENDER UNTIL SMOOTH.) SEASON WITH SALT AND PEPPER. KEEP THE SOUP WARM OVER LOW HEAT UNTIL YOU'RE READY TO SERVE.

MEANWHILE, MAKE THE CROSTINI. PLACE A RACK IN THE CENTER OF THE OVEN AND PREHEAT TO 400. ARRANGE BREAD SLICES ON A BAKING SHEET. DRIZZLE WITH OIL AND SPRINKLE WITH SAGE. TOP WITH FONTINA AND SEASON WITH SALT. BAKE FOR 6 TO 8 MINUTES OR UNTIL CHEESE IS MELTED AND BREAD IS LIGHT GOLDEN.

LADLE SOUP INTO BOWLS AND GARNISH WITH CROSTINI.