



Butternut Squash Orzo Salad

Makes: 6 servings

Prep Time: 25 minutes Cook Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 55 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 3 cups peeled and cubed butternut squash
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 6-8 slices bacon, chopped (omit if vegetarian)
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh rosemary or sage
- 2 tsp maple syrup
- 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper, or to taste
- 1 (16 ounce) box orzo pasta
- 2 cups shredded or torn kale
- 1/2 cup roasted pepitas
- 6 ounces crumbled goat cheese

Balsamic Vinaigrette:

- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1-2 cloves garlic, grated
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh thyme
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 tbsp fig preserves, optional
- 1 tbsp honey or maple syrup
- salt and black pepper
- chili flakes

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 400° F. On the baking sheet, toss together the olive oil, butternut squash, paprika, chili powder, cinnamon, salt, and pepper. Scoot the squash to one side of the pan. On the opposite side, toss the bacon with rosemary, maple, and cayenne. Scatter the bacon in an even layer around the squash.

Bake for 15 minutes, until the bacon is crisping. Pull out of the oven and toss. Bake for another 5 to 10 minutes, watching closely, until the bacon is crisp and the squash tender.

Meanwhile, cook the orzo as directed on the box. In a large salad bowl, combine the kale, warm orzo, and toasted pepitas.

To make the dressing, whisk/shake together all ingredients in a jar. Pour the dressing over the salad and massage into the greens. Add the roasted squash, bacon, and goat cheese, then gently toss. And done! Enjoy!

Recipe from Half Baked Harvest