

Roasted Pear-Butternut Soup with Crumbled Blue Cheese – Sue and Ted Farrand

Yields 6 servings

2 ripe pears, peeled, quartered and cored (Asian pears, often called sand pears, work well for this recipe. They don't get soft like Anjou or Bosc as they ripen so microwave the cut pears for 2 minutes before proceeding.)

2 pounds butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cut into 2-inch chunks

2 medium tomatoes, cored and quartered

1 large leek, pale green and white parts only, halved lengthwise, sliced and washed thoroughly

2 cloves garlic, crushed

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

½ teaspoon salt, divided

Freshly ground pepper, to taste

4 cups vegetable broth, or reduced-sodium chicken broth, divided

2/3 cup crumbled blue-veined cheese

1 tablespoon thinly sliced fresh chives, or scallion greens

Crumbled cooked bacon (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Combine pears, squash, tomatoes, leek, and garlic on a large rimmed baking sheet. Sprinkle with oil, 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper and stir to coat. Spread evenly in a single layer. Roast, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender, 40 to 55 minutes. Let cool slightly.
3. Puree the roasted vegetables until smooth in batches with the broth in a blender or food processor. Transfer to a large saucepan or Dutch oven. Stir in the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt.
4. Cook the soup over medium-low heat, stirring, until hot, about 10 minutes. Divide among 6 bowls and garnish with cheese, chives (or scallion greens), and bacon, if desired.