

Curried Coconut and Corn Soup

Adapted from Deborah Madison

This is a wonderfully versatile summer soup that is good served warm, at room temperature or chilled from the refrigerator. It can be pureed after cooking or served as is.

4 ears corn, yellow or white varieties, shucked
8 cilantro branches plus 2 Tablespoons finely chopped (parsley can be used as well)
½ cup finely diced red onion, trimmings reserved
1 Tablespoon butter, olive oil or roasted peanut oil
½ teaspoon ground turmeric
1 teaspoon ground coriander
½ teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon sweet or smoked paprika
½ teaspoon garam masala (optional)
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
1 Tablespoon flour
1 can light or regular coconut milk (1½ to 2 cups)
Juice of 1 lime, or more to taste
½ cup yogurt and cilantro sprigs for garnish (optional)

1. Heat 6 cups water in a saucepan. Meanwhile, cut each ear of corn in half. Holding the corn, flat side down, slice the corn off the cobs, taking just the top halves of the kernels, then reverse the knife and run the dull edge down the cobs to press out the liquid. Then put the cobs into the heating water with the cilantro branches and any onion trimmings. Simmer for at least 15 minutes—longer if you can—then strain.
2. Melt the butter or put the oil in a soup pot over medium heat. Add the onion, cook for 3 to 4 minutes, then add all the spices and cook for a few minutes more. Stir in the flour, pour in the coconut milk and add the corn and the scrapings, the chopped cilantro, 1½ cups stock and 1 teaspoon salt. If the soup is too thick, thin it with a bit more of the stock. Simmer over medium heat for 10 minutes. Squeeze in the lime juice and taste, adjusting the salt if needed.
3. Serve the soup with a swirl of yogurt and sprigs of cilantro in each bowl.