

PUMPKIN SOUP

3 T butter
1 large onion, finely chopped (1 cup)
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/8 to 1/4 t crushed red pepper
2 (14 ounce) cans of chicken broth
1/2 cup uncooked orzo or wild rice (I used orzo)
1 1/2 cups half and half, light cream or milk (I used half and half)
1T flour
1 (15 ounce) can pumpkin

Optional toppings:

cracked black pepper
red pepper strips
crispy crumbled bacon

in large saucepan melt butter over medium high heat. Add onion and garlic, cook 30 to 5 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally. Stir in crushed red pepper; cook 1 minute. Add broth; bring to boil. Stir in orzo or rice. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, about 10 minutes for orzo or 40 minutes for wild rice, or until orzo or rice is tender.

Mix half and half with flour till well combined. Stir into orzo mixture; cook and stir until slightly thickened and bubbly. Stir in pumpkin; heat through. To serve, sprinkle each serving with cracked black pepper, top with red peppers and/or bacon.

Makes about 6 servings.

NOTE FROM MARGE: for the soup brought to the meeting, I cooked several pieces of bacon and then added the onions and garlic. I then pureed with an immersion blender and continued with soup instructions. In all honesty, I don't think it changed the original soup that much and I will go back to the old way of making it and just add crispy bacon at the end as a topping, with the red pepper...which is my personal preference.

Enjoy ;)