

# A Sutherland Belle



## Bourbon Butternut Squash and Apple Bisque

Serves 6

Fall in Virginia means apple-picking weekends, porch drinks under plaid blankets, and family rolling in with their opinions. That's where this bisque earns its keep—velvety butternut squash, orchard-fresh apples, and a generous splash of bourbon that smooths over seasonal stress with every sip. Bring it to the feast and watch attitudes improve. Better yet, serve a second ladle, and let the bourbon handle the rest.

---

### Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons butter, divided
  - 1 large yellow onion, diced
  - 5 cups peeled & cubed butternut squash from a 3 to 3½ pound squash)
  - 2 Honeycrisp or Gala apples, peeled and chopped
  - 3 cloves garlic, minced
  - 1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more to taste
  - ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg (or a few swipes of fresh)
  - Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
  - 4 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
  - ¼ cup bourbon plus 2 tablespoons bourbon, for finishing
  - ½ cup heavy cream, plus extra for drizzling
  - Crispy sage leaves, for serving (see below)
- 

1. **To make the soup:** Before peeling, poke squash with a fork 6 to 8 times and microwave 3 to 4 minutes to soften the skin — much safer and easier to cut.
2. Melt 3 tablespoons butter in a large Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the onion and cook 4 to 5 minutes until softened.
3. Stir in the squash, apples, garlic, salt, nutmeg, and black pepper. Cook 3 to 4 minutes to bloom the flavors.
4. Add the broth and ¼ cup bourbon. Bring to a simmer.
5. Cover and cook until squash is very tender, 20 to 25 minutes.
6. For the smoothest texture: Carefully transfer the soup in batches to a high-speed blender and blend until completely silky. *Alternatively:* use an immersion blender directly in the pot.
7. Return soup to low heat and stir in the remaining tablespoon of butter and cream. Do not boil once dairy is added.
8. Remove from heat and stir in 2 tablespoons bourbon.
9. Taste and adjust with more salt and pepper. Ladle into bowls, drizzle with cream, and top with crispy sage. (Add a little extra bourbon per bowl for a kick).
10. **To make the crispy sage:** Melt 2 tablespoons butter in a small skillet over medium-low heat.

Add sage leaves; cook 20 to 40 seconds per side, flipping once, until edges curl and leaves crisp. Transfer to paper towels — they finish crisping as they cool. Spoon some sage butter over each bowl.

---

**Storage**

**Refrigerate:** 4–5 days

**Freeze:** Up to 2 months

**Reheat:** Warm gently; avoid boiling once cream is added