RESTORATIVE BUTTERNUT AND GINGER SOUP

This is the perfect, most delicious soup for patients young and old, comforting against ailments from the sniffles to twisted ankles and broken hearts. My mother used to make it for my brother and me when we were sick, served on trays with hot buttered rolls in front of the TV. Because it freezes beautifully, prepare a few extra portions; that way you will have some on hand for days when the whole family falls ill and lying on the couch in your pyjamas is all you can manage.

1 Tbsp olive oil	2 medium red onions, chopped
1 heaped tsp ground cinnamon	1 heaped tsp grated ginger
1 Tbsp brown sugar	salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
3 butternut squashes, peeled, quartered and seeds removed	2 litres chicken stock or water (if you prefer vegetarian)
	1 cup fresh cream

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. Sprinkle the olive oil, cinnamon and brown sugar over the butternut quarters on a baking tray. Roast in the oven for 30–40 minutes, until soft and caramelised.
3. In a saucepan, soften the onions for a few minutes, then add the cooked butternut, ginger, salt, pepper and stock, and simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Pop it all into a food processor and blend until just about smooth (I like a little bit of texture). Please be very careful that there are no children hanging on your pants at this point, as the liquid is piping hot! If the texture is too thick for your liking, add a little extra water. Transfer the blended soup back into the saucepan.
5. When you are ready to serve, stir in the cream and reheat for 3–5 minutes.

SERVING SUGGESTION: Serve with fresh, crusty bread and Crunchy chickpea sprinkle (see below).

CRUNCHY CHICKPEA SPRINKLE

2 x 410g cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed
½ tsp salt
½ tsp brown sugar
½ tsp garlic salt
chilli powder to taste
1 tsp olive oil

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
2. In a bowl, mix all the ingredients together.
3. Spread the zingy chickpeas on a baking tray then pop them in the oven for 10 minutes until crisp and golden.