

# Parmesan topped butternut squash with sage

Takes 1 hour 45 minutes, serves 2 and uses a baking tray, a small and a large pan.

## INGREDIENTS

1 medium butternut squash, around 1kg, washed.  
Olive oil  
90g dried barley  
15g butter  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 clove garlic, bashed once under a knife, skin removed.  
10 sage leaves + extra to serve  
50g Parmesan or pecorino, shaved with a potato peeler to serve

## DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to gas mark 6, 400°F, 204°C, 184°C fan.

Rub the squash with a small drizzle of olive oil, so that the skin has a light coating all over. Lay it down in a baking tray and cook in the oven for 90 minutes, turning once halfway through.

Rinse the barley under cold water, then add to a pan with plenty of water. Bring to the boil, then leave to simmer for 70 minutes.

When both are cooked, remove them from the heat, drain the barley and set them aside to cool.

### Get ahead!

You can cook the barley and squash well in advance, even the day before. Simply cook them, allow them to cool, then cover them and leave in the fridge until you're ready to use them. Once you've done this, the final preparation of the meal is just a quick, 15 minute make before it's on the table.

Melt the butter in a large pan over a low heat with the olive oil. Add the flattened garlic clove and leave to infuse with the oil and butter for at least 3 minutes. You can leave this longer, as long as the garlic isn't cooking and going brown, nor should the butter.

Cut the squash into bite sized chunks, removing the seeds as you go.

Chop the 10 sage leaves roughly, then chop a few extra for serving.

Turn the heat up to medium - high. Remove the garlic clove and discard, unless you want a garlicky surprise in your meal. Add the sage to the pan and stir until well mixed, then add the squash to the pan and mix it in, getting it coated in the garlicky butter and oil. Leave for a few minutes then stir again. Add the barley and mix it all together, leave for a further few minutes before mixing again.

Once it's all heated through, serve onto plates, top with the parmesan shavings, then scatter with the reserved chopped sage.

