

## CHESTNUT - SWEET-POTATO SOUP WITH NUTMEG AND MAPLE SYRUP

Buy leafy celery stalks for this soup; the chopped leaves make a great garnish

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|--------------------|---|
| 2 T                | Butter (_ stick)  |
| 1 C                | Chopped onion   |
| 2 sm<br>separately | Celery stalks, stalks and leaves chopped  |
| 1 med              | Leek, sliced (white and pale green parts only)                                      |
| 1 lg               | Garlic clove, chopped   |
| 1_ lb              | Red-skinned sweet potatoes (yams), peeled,<br>cut into 1-inch pieces (about 5 cups) |
| 4 C                | Chicken stock or canned low-salt chicken broth                                      |
| 1 lb               | Chestnuts (peeled)  |
| 1                  | Cinnamon stick  |
| _ t                | Ground nutmeg   |
| 1_ C               | Half and half   |
| 2 T                | Pure maple syrup  |

Melt butter in heavy large pot over medium-heat.

Add: Onion and sauté 5 minutes. Add chopped celery stalks and leek and sauté until onion is translucent, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and sauté 2 minutes. Add potatoes, chestnuts, chicken stock, cinnamon, and nutmeg; bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer uncovered until potatoes are tender, about 20 minutes.

Remove cinnamon stick and discard. Working in batches, puree soup in blender until smooth. Return to pot. Add half and half and maple syrup and stir over medium-low heat to heat through. Season soup to taste with salt and pepper. (Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cool soup slightly. Cover and refrigerate soup and celery leaves separately. Bring soup to simmer before continuing.) Ladle into bowls. Sprinkle with celery leaves.

Makes 6 to 8 first course servings.