

Peeling thick-skinned winter squash can be a pleasure, or a pain. With a basic, low-tech vegetable peeler, like the Kuhn-Rikon, Switzerland, the super-sharp blade zips right through the tough skin. My first chef-mentor, Robert Pouget, still uses his original ca 1980s, \$2.00 Kuhn-Rikon peeler—from Le Chambord's kitchen.

I'm not a fan of pre-peeled Butternut Squash. I always wonder how many weeks ago it was peeled, and how long it has lingered in the produce section. Freshly peeled Butternuts usually 'bead' with juice when you peel them. They are bright orange in color, have tight skin, and a sweet aroma while cooking . . . all indications of juicy, freshly cut vegetables. Buy fresh—be good to yourself.

### *Cubed-Roasted Butternut Squash with Warm Spices*

1 large Butternut Squash (about 3 pounds), peeled, halved, and seeded  
3 tablespoons Olive, or Grapeseed, Oil  
1 teaspoon Ground Cardamom  
½ teaspoon Ground Cinnamon  
¼ small Nutmeg, freshly grated (about ½ teaspoon Ground Nutmeg)  
Sea Salt\*

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.

Cut squash in 1-inch wide strips, then 1-inch cubes. **Safety Hint:** Cut squash on a wet towel on cutting board to prevent rolling. In a large bowl, combine squash, oil, cardamom, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Stir until all sides are coated with spices.

Line a half-sheet hotel pan (or heavy-duty cookie sheet) with parchment paper. Spread squash in a single layer, allowing space between pieces. **\*DO NOT SALT.** Adding salt now will prevent squash from browning-caramelizing. Salt leaches water and will make squash wet.

Roast about 20 to 25 minutes, or until squash is caramelized and lightly browned (add additional time if squash was cold). After 10 to 15 minutes, use tongs to turn over pieces. Roast until caramelized around the edges; total time is about 20 to 25 minutes. **\*Sprinkle with salt.** Serve immediately.

Serves: about 4-6