Pumpkin and Porcini Soup

Makes 4 to 6 servings

From Moosewood Restaurant Cooks at Home

½ c. broken pieces dried porcini mushrooms (about ¾ ounce)

2 c. boiling water

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2 large onions, minced (about 3 cups)

2 Tbsp. vegetable oil, olive oil, or butter

2 garlic cloves, minced or pressed

2 c. chopped fresh mushrooms

1 tsp. fresh thyme (1/2 tsp. dried)

1 ½ Tbsp. fresh sage (2 tsp. dried)

dash of nutmeg

¼ c. Marsala or dry sherry

1 Tbsp soy sauce

1 c. unsweetened apple juice and 1 c. water, OR 2 c. vegetable stock

4 c. pureed cooked pumpkin

salt and ground black pepper to taste

1 c. milk, almond milk, or half-and-half (optional)

Break up any large pieces of porcini. Place the porcini in a heat-proof bowl, cover with the boiling water, and set aside to soak.

In a soup pot on medium heat, sauté the onions in the oil for 5 to 10 minutes. Stir in the nutmeg, Marsala or sherry and soy sauce. Add the apple juice and water, or vegetable stock, and heat almost to a boil. Stir in the pumpkin.

Remove the porcini from the soaking water with a slotted spoon and add them to the soup. Pour the soaking water through a coffee filter or a paper towel into another bowl to remove any grit, and add it to the soup. Add salt and pepper to taste. If you prefer a creamier soup, add the milk or half-and-half. Serve hot.