

# Cleo Coyle's Honey Roasted Acorn Squash

Text and photos (c) by Alice Alfonsi who writes [The Coffeehouse Mysteries](#) as [Cleo Coyle](#) with her husband, Marc Cerasini.

*Warm and buttery, dripping with honey, this roasted acorn squash feels almost sinful to eat, yet there's very little butter and honey involved. Packed with nutrition and dietary fiber, it makes a wonderful "writer's snack" for me on a fall or winter afternoon. If you would rather not use butter and/or honey, then lightly coat the squash with a neutral-tasting oil (canola or vegetable oil or even coconut oil if you like coconut flavor). This will protect the flesh against the high heat. You can eat it naked or sprinkle it with favorite seasonings—be they nutmeg and cinnamon or chili and cayenne pepper. Or try a bit of orange juice, which is also delicious. May you eat with joy and in good health! ~ Cleo*

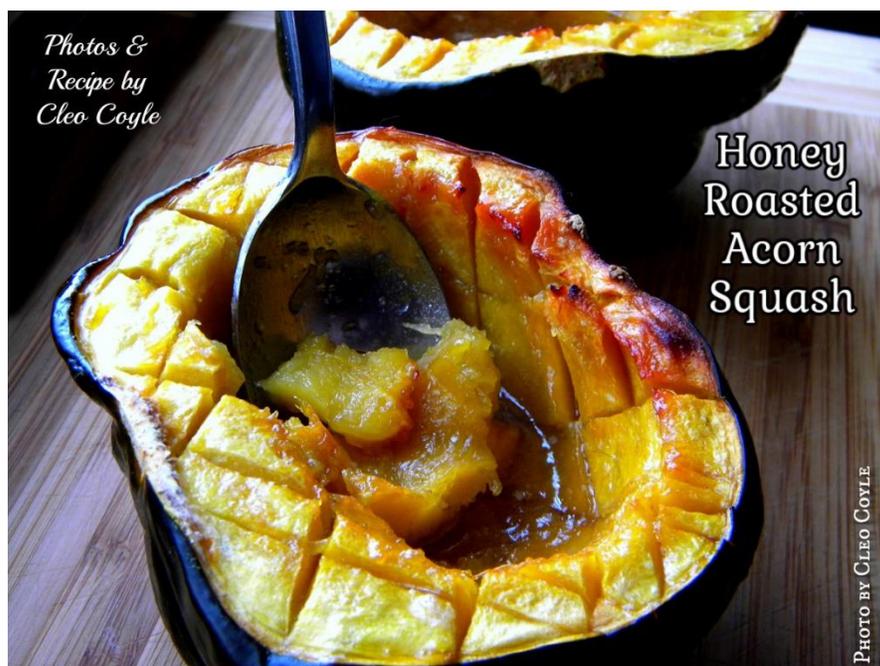


**HOW TO PICK AN ACORN SQUASH:** Your squash should feel heavy for its size. The most common variety is green. The skin should be dark green and dull (not shiny)—partial orange on the skin is ok, but it should be more green than orange. It should also be free of moldy spots & the skin should feel hard, never mushy. An acorn squash doesn't need to be refrigerated. Stored in a cool, dark place, it will keep for a month or more.

**WHY IT'S GOOD FOR US:** Winter Squash is a good source of Dietary Fiber, Vitamin A, Vitamin B6, Folate and Magnesium, and a very good source of Vitamin C, Thiamin, Potassium and Manganese. Even the starch has health benefits. Studies have shown it to have antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, as well as insulin-regulating properties.

## Ingredients

- 1 Acorn Squash
- 1 Tablespoon butter or margarine (1/2 T. for each squash half)
- 1 Tablespoon honey (1-1/2 teaspoons for each half)
- Pinch of kosher salt or coarse sea salt (optional)
- Baking or roasting pan or glass baking dish (pan should have high edges)



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**Step 1 – Cut and clean squash:** Preheat oven to 400°F. Cut squash in half lengthwise from stem to end, using the ribs as a guide (cut in line with the ribs and not across them). I cut the tough bottom off first, score it lightly and then move the knife around the scoring. That's much easier than trying to force the knife through. With a spoon, scoop out the seeds and stringy innards. The seeds make a great snack (see end of recipe).

**Step 2 – Score and smear:** Using a small knife, aggressively score the insides of the squash halves in a checkerboard pattern. This simple step makes a big difference, allowing the butter and syrup to better penetrate the flesh. Now gently smear the butter (1/2 T. for each half) over all exposed areas of the acorn flesh to protect it from the high heat. Drop the remaining butter into each cavity. (Optional – lightly sprinkle with coarse salt. For me, this makes a nice foil with the sweetness, but you can omit.) Drizzle 1 tsp. each of honey around each cavity with the butter. Pour ½ teaspoon each into each cavity. Place these halves in a baking pan, as shown with the cut sides up.

**Step 3 – Prep a water bath:** The water is the magic key to the perfect roasting process with minimal butter and syrup, allowing the flesh to cook and caramelize without drying out or burning in your very hot oven. Add about 1/4 inch (or just a little less) of water to the bottom of your baking pan (which should have high sides) or glass baking dish.



**Step 4 - Bake** in your well pre-heated oven for 1 hour. You may need to bake an additional 15 minutes or so, depending on your oven and the size of your squash and how many you cook at a time. Undercooking is the enemy here. You do not want a squash that has not cooked through and caramelized with that butter and honey. So watch for the squash flesh to become very soft and the tops to become lightly browned (see my photos).

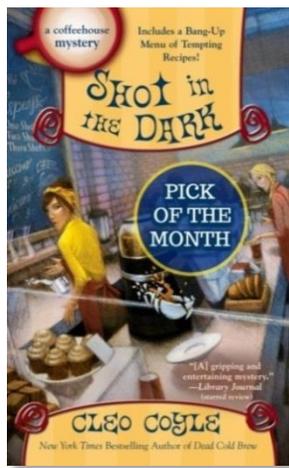
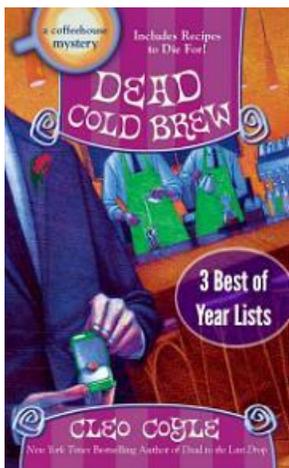


**Step 5 – Spoon and serve:** Remove the squash halves from the oven and spoon any visible syrup over the edges before serving.

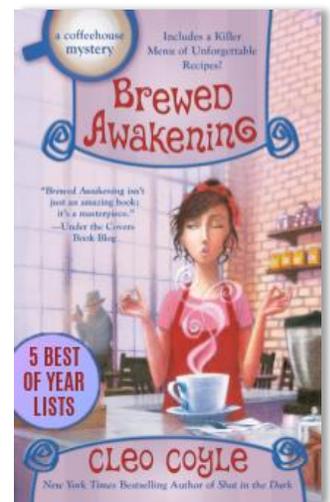


**Roasting Seeds:** Just like pumpkin seeds, the seeds from a winter squash are delicious and nutritious. Wash off the stringy goo from the squash innards and dry them well. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or foil. Spread the seeds in a single layer. Salt them lightly if you like, and roast them right beside the acorn squash (at 400 degrees F.) for about 6 to 8 minutes.

*Eat with joy! ~ Cleo*



The [Coffeeshouse Mysteries](#) are bestselling culinary mysteries, set in a landmark Greenwich Village coffeehouse. Each includes the added bonus of recipes. To learn more and see more recipes, visit Cleo Coyle's online coffeehouse at [www.CoffeeshouseMystery.com](http://www.CoffeeshouseMystery.com) And her recipe blog at [www.CleoCoyleRecipes.com](http://www.CleoCoyleRecipes.com)



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