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by Liz Robb

Fresh Tomato and Basil Soup



Ingredients

900g large vine ripened tomatoes 1 onion
1 potato
1 carrot
1 fat clove of garlic
1 tablespoon of olive oil
A large knob of butter
450ml good vegetable stock
Salt and freshly milled black pepper
A pinch of sugar
A few sprigs of fresh basil
A few tablespoons of double cream or crème fraiche [optional]

Servings

4

Person

Preparation

1. Peel the onion and chop very finely. Peel the carrot and potato and chop both into fine dice. Peel the clove of garlic. 2. Score the tomatoes with a cross shape, going all the way around, then cover in boiling water for a minute or two, drain and peel off the skins. Chop the tomatoes roughly.
3. Heat the oil and the butter in a large saucepan and sauté the onion over a low heat for 3-4 minutes. Add the carrot and potato and continue to cook gently for another 10 minutes, stirring to prevent the potato from sticking.
4. Add the crushed garlic and the chopped tomatoes. Stir in the hot vegetable stock and season well with salt and black pepper. Add a pinch of sugar. Simmer gently, partially covering the pan and stirring occasionally, for about 25 minutes, or until the tomatoes are falling apart and the vegetables are soft.
5. Finely chop the basil leaves and add to the pan. Blend the soup until it is smooth. [If you want a thinner, clearer soup you can sieve it instead, but you will have less soup.] Check the seasoning and the thickness, adding more salt, pepper or stock if necessary.
- 5 If you want to make a creamy flavoured soup, stir the double cream or crème fraiche into the pan over a low heat until it is well combined, not allowing it to boil. I prefer to add just a swirl of cream and a sprinkling of fresh basil to each bowl instead when serving.
- 6 Serve with crunchy toasted ciabatta.

Cooks Note

The flavours of tomato and basil always go so well together and this classic soup, made from big, ripe flavour some vine tomatoes, so plentiful at this time of year, and fresh basil leaves, is always a crowd pleaser.

Serves 4-5
