

Roasted Tomato Soup, Smoked Cheddar Crouton + Basil Oil

Serves 10

INGREDIENTS

For the Soup:

2 ½ lbs fresh tomatoes
28 oz canned tomatoes
6 cloves garlic, peeled
2 small yellow onions, sliced
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
5 cups vegetable stock
4 tbsp butter
½ cup chopped fresh basil leaves
¾ cup heavy cream
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Pea shoots for garnish

Smoked Cheddar Croutons:

2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 tbsp butter
2 cups cubed ciabatta bread
¼ tsp black pepper
½ tsp kosher salt
½ cup grated smoked cheddar cheese
1 tbsp chopped fresh thyme

For the Basil Oil: Yield 1/2 cup

½ bunch fresh basil leaves
1 small garlic clove, crushed
½ cup vegetable oil

METHOD

For the Soup

Preheat oven to 450F.

Wash, core and cut the tomatoes into halves. Spread the tomatoes, garlic cloves and onions onto a sheet pan lined with parchment. Drizzle with 1/2 cup of olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Roast for 20 to 30 minutes, or until caramelized.

Remove roasted tomatoes, garlic and onion from the oven and transfer to a large stock pot. Add ¾ of the vegetable stock, the canned tomatoes, and butter. Season well with salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes or until liquid has reduced by a third.

Wash and dry basil leaves and add to the pot. Use an immersion blender to puree the soup until smooth. Return soup to low heat, add cream and adjust consistency with remaining vegetable stock, if necessary. Season to taste.

For the Smoked Cheddar Croutons:

Preheat oven to 400F. Heat garlic, and oil over low heat and melt butter into the oil. Place the bread in a large bowl and toss with garlic oil and butter. Season with pepper, salt, and add smoked cheddar and thyme. Spread croutons evenly on baking sheet and bake until crisp and golden. (approximately 6-10 minutes)

For the Basil Oil:

Blend the fresh herb with the oil and garlic, season and line a small strainer with several layers of cheesecloth, and strain oil into a glass jar or small bowl.