

TOMATO BASIL SOUP

THE BLUE PLATE



The Blue Plate

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INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups chicken stock (low sodium or unsalted)
- 1 14.5-ounce can tomatoes (peeled or diced will work, too; low sodium/unsalted)
- A few thyme sprigs
- A few lemon slices, including the rind
- A bay leaf
- 4 to 8 garlic cloves (depends on how much you like garlic)
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Heavy cream or half and half
- Fresh basil (Again, depends on how much basil you want)

DIRECTIONS:

Put the stock, tomatoes (with juice), lemon slices, thyme and bay leaf in a medium saucepan and reduce over medium-high heat by about a third. Throw out the thyme, bay leaf and lemon.

Meanwhile, put the oil and garlic in a small sautee pan, turn the heat to medium and let the garlic get brown. Once brown, remove the garlic from the oil and set aside. Save the oil, you're going to need it.

Pour the reduced stock, tomatoes and garlic in a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. Once it's smooth, check the consistency. If you think it should be thicker, pour it in a large sautee pan and let it reduce – stirring constantly – until it feels like soup to you.

Pour all this back in the blender, add the basil, and fire it up. While it's turning, slowly pour the oil into mix. Keep blending and add some cream (maybe a quarter cup).

Add more cream if it needs it. Definitely add salt and pepper. Maybe add some cayenne pepper to give it a kick. Does it need lemon juice to make it a little more acidic? Experiment with cumin. A little smoked paprika will add a smoky depth. Perhaps a pinch of curry? Add whatever you think will taste good.

Serve.

NOTES: See next page for variations