

Maggie's Tomato Soup with fresh basil pesto* (Makes lots!)

1.5 kilo fresh tomatoes (plum or vine tomato are best but expensive)- diced roughly
0.5 litre stock (chicken or vegetable)
1 x medium red onion – diced roughly
1 x medium carrot – diced roughly
3 x cloves fresh garlic – chopped roughly
3 x stick fresh celery – chopped roughly
2 x bay leaves
1 x tablespoon tomato puree
15 x black Kalamata olives (optional)
1 x bunch fresh basil - torn
75 – 100 ml. white wine vinegar
1 x tablespoon sugar (demerara, caster)
Splash of milk or double cream (very optional!)
1 x splash olive oil
Rock salt & crushed black pepper

Basil pesto*(optional)

50g. fresh basil leaves
25g. pine nuts
25g. parmesan cheese (or pecorino)
2 x clove fresh garlic
100 ml. olive oil
Rock salt & crushed black pepper

1 x bunch fresh herbs (basil, parsley or chervil)

Method

Heat a splash of olive oil in a pot then add the onions, carrots, celery and garlic and allow to gently caramelize. Next add the chopped tomatoes (seeds and all) into the pot, stir and reduce the heat. The tomatoes will start to sweat and form a lot of water. Stir often and allow the soup to continue cooking in its own juices for 20 to 30m minutes. Add the bay leaves salt and pepper to taste and the stock and cover the soup. Place a lid over the pot, reduce the heat and allow the soup to gently simmer. Whilst the soup is simmering pour the vinegar into a small pan and add to this the caster or demerrara sugar. Boil together and when the sugar has melted into the vinegar add to the simmering soup.

Now, add the olives (if you fancy them) and the fresh basil leaves. Puree the soup a little for a nice chunky effect or puree longer and pass through a fine sieve for a posher version!

To make the basil pesto

Simply place the basil leaves, pine nuts, olive oil, garlic and parmesan in a blender and blend till a nice smooth consistency. Add as much salt or pepper as you fancy.

NB. Potatoes can be added to this soup for an even chunkier or thicker version. Lemon or lime can also be added to the pesto if desired.