

FOOD

Tomato Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 medium white or yellow onion
- 6 tablespoons (3/4 stick) butter/margarine
- Two 14.5-ounce cans diced tomatoes
- One 46-ounce bottle or can tomato juice
- 3 to 6 tablespoons sugar
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 cups heavy cream
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh basil
- 1/4 cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 1 or 2 tablespoons chicken base, or 3 chicken bouillon cubes
- 1 cup sherry (optional)



Directions:

1. To begin, dice the onion. Melt the butter in a large pot or Dutch oven. Throw in the onion and cook until translucent.
2. Dump in the diced tomatoes and stir to combine. Add the tomato juice.
3. Next - and this is important - in order to combat the acidity of the tomatoes add 3 to 6 tablespoons of sugar. Now, you'll want to start on the low side, then taste and add more as needed. Some tomatoes and juice have more of an acidic bite than others. (For what it's worth, and I realize it's not worth much, I use 6 tablespoons of sugar.)
4. Next, add 1 or 2 tablespoons chicken base to the pot. I added 3, and it wound up being a little too much.
5. Now you can add lots of freshly ground black pepper. Stir to combine, then heat almost to a boil. Then turn off the heat.
6. Add a cup of sherry if desired. Stir in the cream. Add the basil and parsley and stir. Serve warm.

IF YOU WERE SEVEN YEARS OLD, COULD YOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE?

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Mushroom Risotto *with Peas*



Ingredients:

- 8 cups canned low-salt chicken broth
- 1/2 -ounce dried porcini mushrooms
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 cups finely chopped onions
- 10 ounces white mushrooms, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 1/2 cups Arborio rice or short-grain white rice
- 2/3 cup dry white wine
- 3/4 cup frozen peas, thawed
- 2/3 cup grated Parmesan
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, optional

Directions:

1. Bring the broth to a simmer in a heavy medium saucepan. Add the porcini mushrooms. Set aside until the mushrooms are tender, about 5 minutes. Keep the broth warm over very low heat.
2. Melt the butter in a heavy large saucepan over medium heat. Add olive oil. Add the onions and saute until tender, about 8 minutes. Add the white mushrooms and garlic.
3. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the porcini mushrooms to a cutting board. Finely chop the mushrooms and add to the saucepan. Saute until the mushrooms are tender and the juices evaporate, about 5 minutes.
4. Stir in the rice and let it toast for a few minutes. Add the wine; cook until the liquid is absorbed, stirring often, about 2 minutes.
5. Add 1 cup of hot broth; simmer over medium-low heat until the liquid is absorbed, stirring often, about 3 minutes.
6. Continue to cook until the rice is just tender and the mixture is creamy, adding more broth by cupfuls and stirring often, about 28 minutes (the rice will absorb 6 to 8 cups of broth).
7. Stir in the peas. Mix in the Parmesan. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.