

LIGHT AND LUSTY TOMATO SOUP

serves 4

- 1 small yellow onion, quartered
 - 2 stalks celery, cut into 2-inch pieces
 - 1 carrot, cut into 2-inch pieces
 - 1/2 fennel bulb, sliced (use a little more celery if you have no fennel)
 - 1 tablespoon olive oil
 - Generous pinch each: crushed red pepper and Herbes de Provence (see above for substitutions)
 - 4 whole garlic cloves
 - 1/2 cup fresh basil leaves
 - 1 teaspoon kosher salt
 - 1/2 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
 - 1/2 cup water
 - 1/4 cup dry white wine*
 - 2 cups vegetable broth
 - 28-ounce can chopped tomatoes
 - 1 teaspoon honey
- 1 Place onion, celery, carrot, and fennel in food processor fitted with the steel blade. Process, pulsing, until vegetables are diced. (Or dice by hand.)
 - 2 Heat a 6-quart heavy pot over medium low heat with the olive oil, pepper, and Herbes for a minute or until fragrant. Add the whole garlic cloves and cook for a minute or until golden; turn and let cook another few seconds before adding the vegetables from the food processor.
 - 3 Stir in the fresh basil leaves, kosher salt, black pepper. Cook for five minutes, stirring, until vegetables are beginning to soften.
 - 4 Pour in water, wine, broth, and tomatoes. Stir in honey. Bring to a boil.
 - 5 Reduce heat, cover, and let simmer for 15 minutes or so until all vegetables are tender, stirring occasionally.
 - 6 Taste and adjust seasonings. Puree using an immersion blender, in batches in the food processor or blender, or mash with a potato masher. Alternatively, eat as is.
 - 7 Serve hot garnished with one of the following: chopped fresh basil, croutons, or chopped pistachios for vegan version. Grated Parmesan cheese or a spoon of plain Greek yogurt for Gluten-Free version. If you're ok any way at all, choose what you'd like, though just the Parmesan and a little fresh basil are perfectly perfect.

*Replace the wine with water if need be.

For a vegan version, use granulated sugar in place of the honey.

For a gluten-free version, be sure any purchased ingredients are labeled "gluten-free."