

Spiked Gazpacho with Crab

Makes 8 1-cup servings. Doubles easily.

While Gazpacho is one of the quintessential cold soups, I often heat some the next day in a small skillet and poach my eggs in it. Soup: it isn't just for breakfast anymore!

- 12 slices baguette brushed with olive oil and sprinkled with salt/pepper
- 6 medium-sized ripe and heavy, fragrant tomatoes (about 2 pounds), cored and cut into 1/8's
- 1 EACH red and yellow bell peppers, cored, seeded, membranes removed, cut into 1 to 2-inch pieces (can sub a green pepper for the yellow)
- 1 English cucumber, cut into 1-inch pieces (If you use a regular cuke, peel it and seed it by slicing it in half length-wise and running a spoon down each half's center.)
- 3/4 cup chopped red onion
- 2 plump young garlic cloves, minced
- Juice of one lemon
- Juice of two limes
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt or to taste
- 3/4 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
- 2 teaspoons Sriracha sauce or 4-5 drops hot sauce such as Tabasco-or to taste
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 6 tablespoons Tequila (1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons)
- Honey, optional
- Tomato juice (may or may not need depending on the juiciness of your tomatoes)
- 1/2 pound lump crab meat, picked over for shells and cartilage, for garnish

Tortilla chips--optional for scooping up soup out of the glasses.

1. Grill baguette slices over high heat for about two minutes on both sides until crispy and brown or run under broiler briefly, turn, and brown again on second side. Slice each piece of bread once from an outer edge to the center and set aside. This allows you to hang the bread off the side if you're serving the soup in glasses. Skip this step if you're using bowls.
2. Place or pour all ingredients except bread, honey, tomato juice, and crab (tomatoes - Tequila) into a food processor or blender and pulse until well-blended, but not smooth. You may need to do this in batches. If needed, stir in enough tomato juice to make 2 quarts of soup. Taste and adjust seasonings, including lemon juice, a drizzle of honey if the soup is too acidic, or more olive oil for a smoother taste. Chill for three hours.
3. Ladle soup into glasses or small bowls; top with a spoonful of crab or let guests add their own. Hang bread slices on the sides of the glasses or, if using bowls, put them on top of the soup as a large crouton. Pass extra hot sauce at table. Serve cold. This soup will keep well- covered in the refrigerator for 3-4 days. Do not freeze.