

Roasted Tomato & Red Lentil Soup

Prep: 15 minutes • Cook: 1 hour

Slow-roasted tomatoes and a whole head of garlic create deep, caramelized flavor, while red lentils simmer into a naturally creamy, hearty soup. Fresh basil brightens the finish for a cozy, satisfying bowl.

Ingredients

- 2 1/2 pounds tomatoes (quartered (halved if cherry))
- 1 head garlic (top sliced off)
- 3-4 tablespoons olive oil (divided)
- 1 onion (diced)
- 1 medium carrot (peeled and diced)
- 2 stalks celery (diced)
- 1 (4.5 oz) tube tomato paste
- 6 cups vegetable broth
- 1 cup red lentils (rinsed)
- 2-3 sprigs fresh basil sprigs
- 1/4 cup fresh basil (chopped)
- to taste salt
- to taste black pepper
- 1/2 cup nondairy cream (optional, for finishing)
- to taste tofu almond ricotta (optional, for serving)
- to taste vegan pesto (optional, for serving)
- to taste sourdough croutons (optional, for serving)

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Quarter larger tomatoes (halve cherry tomatoes) and place on a rimmed baking sheet or in a casserole dish. Drizzle with olive oil, season with salt and pepper, and toss to coat.
3. Prep the garlic: Remove papery outer skins from the head and slice off about 1/2 inch from the top to expose the cloves. Drizzle the cut side with a little olive oil and nestle the head into the center of the tomatoes.
4. Roast tomatoes and garlic for 45–60 minutes until tomatoes are jammy and lightly browned. Flip the head of garlic upside-down after about 30 minutes to prevent the tops from over-browning.
5. While tomatoes roast, heat a little olive oil in a soup pot over medium heat. Add onion, celery, and carrot and sauté until onions are translucent, 4–6 minutes.

6. Add tomato paste, stirring to coat the aromatics. Cook, stirring often, until the paste caramelizes and turns a deeper rusty red, about 5–7 minutes, deglazing with a splash of water if needed.
7. Pour in vegetable broth. Rinse red lentils thoroughly in a sieve, checking for any small pebbles, then add to the pot along with 2–3 sprigs of basil.
8. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a rapid simmer and cook 25–30 minutes, stirring occasionally, until lentils have split and begun to fall apart.
9. Transfer the roasted tomatoes to the pot. Let the garlic cool slightly, then squeeze the soft cloves into the soup.
10. Remove and discard the basil sprigs. Use an immersion blender to blend to your preferred texture (smooth or leaving some texture from the lentils).
11. Stir in chopped fresh basil. Season to taste with salt and pepper. If desired, swirl in nondairy cream for extra body.
12. Serve with your favorite toppings such as tofu almond ricotta, vegan pesto, and sourdough croutons.

Tags: Vegan, Soup, Tomato, Lentils, Comfort Food, Gluten Free
