

Simple Tomato Soup

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for serving
2 cloves garlic, minced or grated
1/2 small onion, roughly chopped
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes, more or less, to taste
1 slice good white bread, crusts removed, torn into rough 1/2-inch pieces (about 1 ounce)
1 (28-ounce) can whole tomatoes, the best you can afford (See Note)
1 cup water or vegetable stock
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
Minced chives, basil, or parsley as garnish

Combine olive oil, garlic, onion, oregano, red pepper flakes, bread, tomatoes and their juices, and water or stock in the jar of a high-powered blender. Turn blender on to low speed and slowly increase speed to maximum. Blend until soup is completely smooth, about 2-3 minutes. Season the soup to taste with salt and pepper.

Bring to a simmer over medium low heat, stirring occasionally. Top with garlic croutons and Parmigiano cheese.

In the summer you can serve this soup cold, garnished with herbs and drizzled with olive oil. Chill at least 4 hours, or overnight. Stir before serving. If it's too thick, adjust the texture by whisking in water a tablespoon at a time until desired consistency is reached.)

Note: During tomato season, use the ripest heirloom tomatoes you can find.