

Gazpacho

Adapted from the recipe in Field of Greens.

There are three ways to crush or puree the tomatoes for this soup: by hand, using a potato masher; with a food processor; or with a blender. Blending can mix a lot of air into the puree; use a low speed and blend no longer than necessary. A food processor introduces less air but often roughly cuts the tomatoes. A potato masher works best. Cut the tomatoes in quarters after peeling them and crush in a large bowl until you have the consistency of a runny salsa. Briefly blanching tomatoes in boiling water loosens the skins for easy removal.

5 lb. ripe organic summer tomatoes, peeled
1 cucumber (about 8 oz. as purchased), peeled, seeded, and chopped
1 c. chopped purple onion (about 1 medium onion)
4 T. chopped fresh basil leaves
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 1/2 t. salt
1/4 t. black pepper
1/8 t. cayenne pepper

Optional:

2 t. olive oil
3 T. lime juice (less if the tomatoes are tart)
1/2 t. ground cumin

Crush or puree the tomatoes. Combine with the other ingredients in a large bowl. Add lime juice if desired. For a thinner soup or a milder tomato flavor, stir in up to 1 1/2 cups water. Serve chilled. Serves 6-8.