

Tomato soup: The versatile soup with many reincarnations

Hockey has started, gymnastics never stopped, dance has started, school has started, every organization in town has started up again after a summer hiatus, work projects are building as companies get back into the full swing of things— WHEN does it stop?

When you're dead, I suppose. My friends make fun of me regularly because I always seem to have so many things on the go, but I guess some of us were just born to be busy— consciously or not, we make it happen. So, with all of this going on, what are you going to feed your family for dinner?

Today's recipe is a great one for you. First of all, many of you will be able to harvest the tomatoes right out of your garden. The rest of you can buy them, very reasonably priced, local and delicious. Or, if you're really strapped for time, just use canned ones— the soup still tastes yummy. As a matter of fact, in the winter time, that's all I use to make soups, because the imported tomatoes in the winter are just awful.

So when you make this soup— make a double, triple or quadruple batch. It freezes really well, so you can freeze some for dinner in a couple of weeks. You can make one batch with half the liquid and with the addition of a little garlic and oregano, it makes a totally yummy pasta sauce.

You can add a bit of 35% cream to either the soup to make it a tomato basil cream soup or you can add it to the pasta sauce to make it a blush sauce. You can add garlic or any number of fresh herbs; you can add other veggies— some chopped up coloured peppers and carrot cook nicely in there as well. Add them at the stage that the onions are added (right at the beginning).

This recipe comes from Gerry's kitchen, but

Lori Gysel & Gerry Kentner



I make a very similar version, except, I am a bit lazier and I don't even peel the tomatoes— I just wash them, chop them and throw them in. By the time they cook and you puree the soup, you won't even notice them.

If you want to make this into more of a meal, cook up some frozen meatballs and serve it as meatball soup with a little parmesan cheese sprinkled on top. Or, use the pasta sauce version and serve meatball subs (meatballs cook in the oven separately, then go into the sauce to get all saucy, then pile them on crusty buns with a bit of cheese on top). Or use the pasta sauce version and serve spaghetti and meatballs.

You can also make the blush pasta sauce version (the one with the cream added) and serve it over pasta with some sliced, grilled chicken— you would pay some serious dollars for that at the local pasta restaurant.

See what I mean— this is one of those basic recipes that you can do a ton of things with, so make lots and enjoy it in a variety of ways.

Have fun and keep cooking!

(Lori and Gerry can be reached at whatscookin@independentfreepress.com)

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