

COULIS DE TOMATES À LA PROVENÇALE

Fresh Tomato Purée with Garlic and Herbs. A thick, concentrated tomato sauce with real Mediterranean flavor. (from Mastering The Art of French Cooking by J. Child, L. Bertholle and S. Beck). Used with broiled or boiled chicken, boiled beef, meat patties, hot meat leftovers, eggs, pastas, and pizzas.

For about 2 cups:

- A heavy-bottomed, 3-quart saucepan
 - 1/3 cup finely minced yellow onions
 - 2Tb olive oil
1. Cook the onions and olive oil slowly together for about 10 minutes, until the onions are tender but not browned.
 - 2 tsp flour
 2. Stir in the flour and cook slowly for 3 minutes without browning.
 - 3 lbs. ripe red tomatoes, peeled, seeded, juiced, and chopped (about 4½ cups)
 - 1/8 tsp sugar
 - 2 cloves mashed garlic
 - A medium herb bouquet: 4 parsley sprigs, ½ bay leaf, and 1/4 tsp thyme tied in cheesecloth
 - 1/8 tsp fennel
 - 1/8 tsp basil
 - Small pinch of saffron
 - Small pinch of coriander
 - A 1-inch piece (¼ tsp) dried orange peel
 - ½ tsp salt
 3. Stir in the tomatoes, sugar, garlic, herbs, and seasonings.
 4. Cover pan and cook slowly for 10 minutes, so the tomatoes will render more of their juice.
 5. Uncover and simmer for about half an hour, adding spoonfuls of tomato juice or water if the sauce becomes so thick it risks scorching.
 6. The purée is done when it tastes thoroughly cooked and is thick enough to form a mass in the spoon.
 7. Remove herb bouquet.
 8. If necessary, stir in 1 or 2 tablespoons of tomato paste for color, and simmer 2 minutes.
 9. Correct seasoning.
 10. Strain the sauce if you wish.
 11. May be refrigerated or frozen.