

GAZPACHO: The Soup of All Summer Soups!



If it's too hot to cook or it's raining, outdoor grilling is a no-go! Now what? The answer is GAZPACHO! This cold Spanish soup is an easy and versatile summer favorite. You can serve it as a dinner appetizer or in small glasses for a company-worthy summer drink. Not only does it store well in the fridge for a few days, but gazpacho also works perfectly as a dish to make ahead.

INGREDIENTS

8 to 12 servings, about 1 quart (recipe can be halved)

2 lbs., ripe red tomatoes, cored, cut into chunks

1 Italian frying pepper cored, seeded, chopped

½ red bell pepper, cored, seeded, chopped (save some small chunks for garnish)

1 cucumber, peeled and chopped (save some small chunks for garnish)

1 small mild onion (white or red), peeled, cut into chunks

1 clove garlic

2 teaspoons sherry vinegar, more to taste

Salt

½ cup extra-virgin olive oil, to taste, plus more for drizzling

Optional: micro greens or pea sprouts, chopped avocado, fresh corn kernels, fennel fronds, fresh basil, cilantro or parsley leaves, for garnish.

DIRECTIONS

Combine tomatoes, pepper, cucumber, onion, and garlic in a high-speed blender or in a large deep bowl if using hand mixer. Blend at high speed until very smooth, at least 2 minutes, occasionally scraping down the sides with a rubber spatula.

With the motor running, add the vinegar and 2 teaspoons salt. Slowly drizzle in the olive oil. Continue blending until the mixture becomes smooth and emulsified. Drizzle in more olive oil if it seems too watery; the texture should be creamy.

Press the mixture through a strainer, pushing all the liquid through with a spatula, discarding the solids. Pour into a glass, one-quart pitcher and chill until very cold, at least 6 hours or overnight.

To Serve: Adjust the seasonings. If it has thickened too much, Stir in a few tablespoons of ice water.

Before serving: If soup is very thick, stir in a few tablespoons of ice water. Serve in glasses, over ice if desired, or in a bowl. Add a few drops of olive oil, and small, chopped garnishes. (See above)

Based on a New York Times recipe.