

Zuppa di Pomodori di Bontroni

This is a recipe for a 5 litre pot.

I make variations but the base method works for me. I eat lots of it during a year, often three generous helpings a day.

To make it into **Minestrone** add carrots and celery and whatever you fancy. Do this after you have whizzed then simmer for a further 30 minutes.

To make it into **Tuscan Bean Soup** whizz as before then add a 200g of Cannellini beans and a 200g tin of Berlotti beans and a handful of Pasta and simmer for 30 minutes.

Ingredients for base soup:

- A tray of 12 * 400ml tins of tomatoes. I use Lidl Pomodori Pelati (peeled tomatoes) which are whole tomatoes. The lazy way is to use Chopped Tomatoes.
- I like a lot of Onions in my soups. I put 4 medium or 6 small brown onions and sometimes add a red onion for colour. I chop them roughly because they will be whizzed, see later.
- I use the Marigold brand of Swiss Bouillon Vegetable Stock granules. For this recipe I add 100g, (but I like it a bit salty) and 75 g or less may suit.
- I use the Gia brand of Garlic Puree and add a heaped tablespoon but you might like less.
- I use Tesco or Asda Basil puree to add flavour but if not use dried or fresh Basil to taste.

Additional:

The above are what make a basic and perfectly acceptable soup. But I use additional ingredients and if I do so :

- 100g of sun-dried tomatoes. Lidl do jars of these with capers in olive oil. Drain off the oil before adding.
- 70 to 100g of Tomato Puree Concentrate.

Method:

- I use a 5 litre cook-pot and start with a small amount of water and bring to **SIMMER ONLY. DO NOT KEEP AT HIGH HEAT!** -this will risk ingredients sticking to base of pot and 'sticking/burning!' You have been warned.
- Add chopped onions and leave for 10 minutes to soften.
- Open all the cans of Pomodori Pelati at once.

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- I use a wide deep bowl to decant 4 tins at a time.
- Use your hand to strain juice into cook-pot leaving the tomatoes in the bowl.
- Examine each tomato and trim away any discoloured bits and drop bits into empty tin.
- Trim away loose skin and the end pip of the tomato.
- (I never try to strain out the tomato seeds! They pass through 'the system' very easily!)
- Do not bother to chop the tomatoes or squash them, just drop them lightly into the cook-pot.
- Complete the process for all 12 tins.
- The liquor, still on a low heat, will have cooled somewhat in this process.
- Increase heat and STIR as you add the other ingredients viz. Stock Granules, Garlic, Basil.
- Add 'Additional' ingredients to taste/ availability.
- Bring to near the boil, reduce to simmer for **about an hour**.
- Whizz either fully or partly. Partly leaves nice wee bits to find as you eat.

I hope you enjoy this. I eat it all year round, as part of my Mediterranean Diet, which of course means lots of Tuna bean Salads and several large glasses of wine.