

Roasted Heirloom Cherry Tomato Soup

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 Spanish onions, peeled, halved
- 4 pounds ripe heirloom cherry tomatoes, about 6½ pints
- 6 cloves garlic
- ¾ teaspoon coarse salt
- Freshly ground pepper
- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves
- 8 cups chicken or vegetable stock
- 6 ounces goat cheese
- 1 ounce aged balsamic vinegar

Directions: Heat oven to 375 degrees. Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large, heavy-bottomed skillet over medium heat. Place onion halves cut-side down in skillet; cook until caramelized, 4 minutes on each side. Set aside ¼ pound tomatoes (about ¾ cup) for garnish. Place remaining tomatoes, the caramelized onions and garlic on 2 rimmed baking sheets; drizzle with remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil, or more as needed. Season with ½ teaspoon salt and pepper to taste. Roast in the oven, 30 minutes.

Place roasted tomatoes, onions, garlic, basil and chicken or vegetable stock in a large, heavy-bottomed saucepan; simmer, stirring occasionally, 30 minutes. Puree soup in a blender, in batches if necessary. Season with remaining ¼ teaspoon salt and pepper to taste. Cut reserved cherry tomatoes in half. Serve in warm soup bowls garnished with goat cheese, halved cherry tomatoes and a balsamic vinegar drizzle.

Note: Chris Nugent suggests passing the blended soup through a fine strainer; we omitted that step because we enjoyed the pureed texture. Nugent calls for a total of 1 cup olive oil in the recipe; we've cut that amount back considerably. For roasting, drizzle the vegetables with more olive oil if you like.

Source: Adapted from a recipe by Chris Nugent, executive chef at Goosefoot restaurant in Chicago