

Blender Gazpacho

6 servings

2 pounds ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeded and coarsely chopped, or one 28-ounce can best-quality plum tomatoes, chopped

1 medium onion, preferably a sweet variety such as Vidalia or Walla Walla, coarsely chopped

1 large cucumber, peeled

1/2 green bell pepper, coarsely chopped

1/2 red bell pepper, coarsely chopped

2 scallions, coarsely chopped

3 garlic cloves

1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil

3 tablespoons sherry vinegar or balsamic vinegar

1 to 2 teaspoons hot pepper sauce

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1/2 to 1 cup chilled tomato juice

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Croutons, chopped fresh herbs, sliced scallions or diced avocado, for garnish



In a large bowl, stir together the tomatoes, onion, cucumber, bell peppers, scallions and garlic. Working in 2-cup batches, whirl the mixture in a blender until finely chopped but not pureed. Return the mixture to the bowl and stir in the oil, vinegar, hot pepper sauce and cumin. Add enough of the cold tomato juice to make the gazpacho soupy but not too thin. Season generously with salt and black pepper.

Cover the bowl and refrigerate the soup until very cold, at least a couple of hours or for up to 2 days. Stir the gazpacho and ladle it into bowls, or pour it at the table from a wide-mouth pitcher. Garnish with croutons, herbs, scallions or diced avocado.

Honey Tomato Bruschetta

2 pints cherry or grape tomatoes, halved lengthwise
1 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons clover honey
2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
12 baguette slices, cut 1/2 inch thick on the bias
1 cup fresh ricotta (8 ounces)
1 tablespoon buckwheat or chestnut honey
6 basil leaves, thinly sliced or torn



Preheat the oven to 300°. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. In a large bowl, toss the tomatoes with the olive oil, honey, thyme leaves, salt and pepper. Scrape the tomatoes onto the prepared baking sheet and turn them cut side up. Bake the tomatoes for about 1 hour and 25 minutes, until they begin to shrivel and brown. Let cool. These can be made ahead and can stay in refrigerator for a couple of days but should be brought to room temperature if refrigerated.

Preheat the broiler. Spread out the baguette slices on a baking sheet. Broil for about 30 seconds on each side, until the edges are golden brown. Spread the ricotta over the baguette slices and top with the slow-roasted tomatoes. Lightly drizzle the tomatoes with the buckwheat honey, sprinkle with the sliced basil and serve with additional buckwheat honey on the side.