

Creamy Tomato Soup with Pistachio Gremolata

If there is a better meal for a chilly fall night than soup, I haven't figured it out yet. My October is usually filled with various soups and stews. Some of my favorites are black bean chili or baked potato, but one of my favorite simple soups is tomato. There are so many different things you can do with tomato soup, but a thick creamy tomato is best on night when you just want to curl up on the couch in your pajamas and watch Netflix.

This soup is just that: simple, flavorful, and comforting, but it gets a bit of a makeover with the toppings. A quick chop of some parsley with garlic and lemon zest with the added crunch of pistachios (you can use any nut here really) and a drizzle of fragrant avocado oil take it to a new level. Some sesame seeds add texture.

This is a really forgiving soup, and has a lot of leeway when it comes to ingredients. I used leeks, but if you don't have those, an onion will do. The only thing I would be sure of is that you're using whole canned tomatoes and not diced. While diced are good for things like stews where you want a chunky texture, whole tomatoes are really much better here. Trust me —after many so-so tomato soups and sauces using diced tomatoes, I realized the error in my ways. Speaking of texture, feel free to puree until completely smooth or give it a quick whirl in the blender to have

some veggie pieces in there. Either way, the flavor is definitely still there. Serve this with your favorite bread, or even a grilled cheese.

Ingredients:

Soup:

3 tablespoons extra-virgin avocado oil
2 leeks (or a small onion) sliced
2 stalks celery, diced
3 tablespoons flour
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 28-ounce cans whole tomatoes in juice
1 cup chicken or vegetable broth
1 cup heavy cream (use coconut milk for dairy-free)
Sea salt and fresh ground pepper, to taste

Gremolata:

1 small bunch fresh parsley
1 clove garlic
Zest of 1 lemon
1/4 cup roasted pistachios

To serve:

Extra-virgin avocado oil

Toasted sesame seeds

Bread

Directions:

Heat the oil in a heavy bottomed pot over medium high heat. Add the leeks and celery and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the flour and cook for about 5 more minutes, stirring every so often. Add the garlic and cook for another minute.

Add the tomatoes and broth and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer and simmer for about 15-20 minutes, until soup is thickened and tomatoes are broken down. Transfer to a blender or food processor and blend until desired texture is reached. Transfer back to the pot, add the cream and simmer over low heat until heated through.

To make the gremolata, put all of the ingredients on a cutting board and chop until fine.

Serve the soup topped with a tablespoon or so of gremolata, a generous drizzle of avocado oil, and a sprinkling of sesame seeds.