

Tomato Basil Soup

Serves 4

1 pound fresh tomatoes
½ cup carrots, chopped
½ cup leeks, chopped
½ cup shallots, chopped
½ teaspoon garlic, chopped
¼ cup olive oil
1 sprig fresh thyme
2 bay leaves
¼ cup tomato paste
8 cups chicken stock
5 teaspoons fresh basil

Heat olive oil in a 4 qt. Sauce pan. Add tomatoes, leeks, carrots, shallots and garlic. Sauté for 1-2 minutes. Add fresh thyme, bay leaves, tomato paste and chicken stock. Simmer on low heat for 20-25 minutes. Remove thyme and bay leaves. Puree mixture in blender or food processor. Reheat soup. Top with freshly chopped basil in each bowl.

Creamy Black Walnut Soup

Serves 4 - 6

2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons flour
5 cups chicken stock
½ cup black walnuts, chopped
1 bay leaf
¾ cup heavy cream
3 tablespoons sour cream
¼ teaspoon thyme
½ cup tart red cherries, pitted and drained

Melt the butter in a large saucepan. Stir in the flour, salt, and cayenne pepper and continue stirring into a roux. Pour in the stock and whisk until it boils and is slightly thickened. Stir in the walnuts and bay leaf and simmer, partly covered, for 15 minutes. Add the cream, sour cream, and rub the thyme into the pot. Simmer 2 minutes. When ready to serve, remove the bay leaf and add the cherries.

Carrot Thyme Soup

6 cups chicken broth
1½ pounds carrots, sliced
1 onion, chopped;
6 teaspoons butter
½ cup cream
2 teaspoons thyme
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

In a large saucepan, combine chicken broth and sliced carrots. Bring the broth to a boil, and simmer covered for 20 minutes, or until the carrots are tender.

In a food processor fitted with the steel blade, puree the mixture in batches and force the puree through a food mill into another large saucepan.

In a small skillet, cook chopped onion in butter over moderate heat, stirring, for 3 minutes, or until softened. Add the onion to the saucepan with cream, thyme, nutmeg, salt, and pepper. Bring the soup to a boil, and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and let stand, covered, for 5 minutes.