

Bacon & Tomato Soup

from 'CookingClassForDads.com'

This is NOT like tomato soup from a can – this is really a great MEAL – and wicked easy too!

INGREDIENTS

2-3 tbsl - good EVOO (extra virgin olive oil)
1/2 lb. - Bacon—or even pancetta
1 - Small onion—chopped
2– 24 oz. cans Diced tomatoes
5 slices - Your favorite bread (fresh or dry) cut into cubes
8 cups - Chicken broth (not chicken stock)
1/2 lb. - Baby bella mushrooms (sliced)
Herbs/spices Salt/pepper, oregano/basil/ (red pepper flakes-opt.)
Finishes - Sour cream or mascarpone cheese (or even both—wow)

TOOLS

8-10 qt saucepan. If it has a lid, that would be great. Bigger is easier to work with, trust me.

TIPS

This recipe makes enough for 8 servings. I usually put the unused portion(s) in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 4 days. It makes a great quick lunch on a cold winter's day.

EVOO = Extra Virgin Olive Oil

DIRECTIONS

1:

In a decent size frying pan, add 1/2 of the EVOO and saute the bacon until it's almost crispy, maybe 10 minutes. Then add the onions and the mushrooms.

Continue to saute these until they're starting to brown up somewhat, perhaps another 5 minutes.

2:

Move the bacon, onions, and mushrooms to an 8-10 qt pot, but leave behind the drippings (we're not wasting that—it's the best part). Set the pot over medium heat and add the tomatoes (with all the juices) and the chicken broth. Stir together to blend.

3:

Meanwhile back in the fry pan, put the bread cubes into the pot with the remaining drippings and let them brown all over, turning them so that they don't burn. They will absorb most of the drippings (try not to eat these yet—I dare you!). When they look done, turn off the heat and move the bread to a dish for later use.

4:

Add the spices to the pot with the soup in it and season to taste. Bring the whole shooting-match up to a boil. Then immediately turn it to medium low heat and let it simmer for about 10 minutes. (this gives all the flavors a chance to blend together. At this point you're basically done with the heavy-lifting.

5:

Just before serving, maybe 3 minutes ahead, add the bread cubes. They'll be bringing lots of flavor to the party.

6:

Serve this in bowls with a dollop of sour cream or mascarpone, or both.