



Tomato Bisque

8-10 Servings

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 ½ pounds tomatoes roughly chopped (or one large can - 28 oz)
5 cups chicken or vegetable stock
5 + 1 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
3 good sized shallots, chopped
2 carrots, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
¼ cup brandy/cognac
3 tablespoons fresh parsley
2 teaspoon dried thyme
2 bay leaves
2 ½ teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon white pepper
1 tablespoon minced Pancetta
1 cup heavy cream

Place Tomatoes in a soup pot with enough olive oil to coat bottom. Cook at medium heat for about 8-10 minutes. Using immersion blender, puree Tomatoes. Add stock and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer.

Add one tablespoon of Butter to a *different* pan, followed by Pancetta. Cook Pancetta until crisp, then remove from pan and set aside. Add remaining Butter, Onions, Celery, Carrots, and Garlic to pan, and sauté until tender. Add ¼ cup Cognac/Brandy, and allow to burn off. Do not attempt to flambé unless you have done so successfully before this..

Add Flour and remaining Butter to pan and sauté to make roux (about 5-8 minutes). Add to Tomato Stock mixture from above, stirring constantly while adding. When incorporated, add Parsley, Bay leaf and Thyme, Salt and Black Pepper. Bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer for about 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove Bay Leaf.. Taste for seasoning. You may need to add more Brandy or Thyme. Cook for an additional fifteen minutes.

Allow to cool. Working in batches, transfer the mixture to a blender and puree until smooth. Taste and re-season if necessary.

Using a sieve or a strainer, over a large bowl, strain the Tomato puree. This is the base for the soup. It can be refrigerated for about a week or two. When ready to serve, reheat over medium heat and whisk in Heavy Cream. Spoon in bowls and top with Pancetta crumbles. Serve immediately.