

TOMATO ROASTED GARLIC SOUP

2 heads of fresh garlic

1 Tbsp olive oil

2 cups chopped onions

2 cups chopped celery

6 cans (14 oz) of stewed and/or equal amounts of diced tomatoes

2 bay leaves

4 tsp dried basil

2 tsp dried oregano

2 tsp dried thyme

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Remove outer papery skin from 2 HEADS of garlic, leave cloves intact. Place on a sheet of foil, drizzle with 1 tsp olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Loosely wrap foil around garlic heads, closing in a large bundle and roast for 40 minutes. Transfer to a plate and let cool. Separate garlic into cloves and squeeze soft garlic into a small bowl.

In a large saucepan over medium heat, heat 1 Tbsp olive oil. Add 2 cups chopped onion, 2 cups chopped celery and the softened garlic and sauté for 5 minutes till softened. Add: 1 cup water, 6 cans (14 oz) stewed tomatoes with juices and/or fresh tomatoes on the vine if available, 2 bay leaves, 4 tsp dried basil, 2 tsp dried oregano, 2 tsp dried thyme, and salt and pepper to taste. Bring to a gentle boil, reduce heat and let simmer for up to 30 minutes to blend flavors. Add salt and pepper to taste.

In a blender, puree soup in batches until smooth. Keep hot in a crockpot.

Optional: warm up a baguette of artisan bread and serve with garlic butter (3/4 cup softened salted butter combined with 4 cloves of minced fresh garlic).

