

## (Un)Traditional Thanksgiving Day Tomato Soup

As soon as the large red pot is hefted out of the top cupboard in our kitchen each year, solely devoted to cookware, I know it's time to make tomato soup. Without much talk about when the soup will be made leading up to it, it makes for a fun guessing game, but a good estimation can be once the sun starts to set earlier and earlier and often on the cusp of December. Although tomato soup isn't a worn or ancestral recipe, I can tell that it may be on its way to being so. Two years ago, brainstorming began on what could be made on Thanksgiving. My Dad, in charge of preparing the Thanksgiving day meal, was tired of making turkey and traditional Thanksgiving food since only my immediate family would be there. After much contemplation, tomato soup was chosen as the winner.

With a cooking time of just over 2 hours, having accuracy and patience is essential. Made from several plum tomatoes, not puree, this recipe is truly delicious and natural. The start of the process to make the soup involves spreading the tomatoes into a one-layer array onto a baking sheet, similar to what you would do when making sugar cookies, though there's no strong smell of the cloying sweetness wafting around the house. Once thoroughly cooked in the oven, the tomatoes simmer in the large red sauna. Half of the wooden spoon tinges to a dark brown from mixing the soup around. To ensure that the soup is entirely mixed up, the whirl of the shiny metallic blender turns on and off, on and off, turning the tomatoes into a deep orange liquid. As a final touch to garnish and top off the soup, many herbs and spices such as thyme leaves, basil, crushed pepper flakes, and ground black pepper add to the earthy overall taste of the dish. The pungent aroma of spices mixes and mingles, and it's impossible not to notice how fragrant the air smells as it distributes throughout the entire house.

The soup is ladled into several large bowls for Thanksgiving dinner. As everyone sits down at the table, I can see the steam vaporizing into the air, highlighted against the cream-colored bowls. Without even tasting it yet, I can immediately tell that the soup will be rich and delicious, ripe with the distinct taste of fresh tomatoes and flavorful seasonings. The soup is devoured by all quickly, and it's the centerpiece of this Thanksgiving day memory.

Ingredients	Prep & Cook Time	Steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 30 ripe plum tomatoes</li> <li>❖ ¼ cup + 2 tablespoons olive oil</li> <li>❖ 1 tablespoon kosher salt</li> <li>❖ 2 cups chopped yellow onions</li> <li>❖ 1 ½ teaspoons freshly ground black pepper</li> <li>❖ 6 garlic cloves, minced</li> <li>❖ 2 tablespoons unsalted butter</li> <li>❖ ¼ teaspoon crushed pepper flakes</li> <li>❖ 1 can of plum tomatoes</li> <li>❖ 4 cups fresh basil leaves</li> <li>❖ 1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves</li> <li>❖ 1 quart chicken stock or water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Prep: 15 minutes</li> <li>❖ Cook: 1 hour 35 minutes</li> <li>❖ Total: 1 hour 50 minutes</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preheat oven to 400°</li> <li>2. Toss tomatoes, ¼ cup olive oil, salt, and pepper together. Spread tomatoes in 1 layer onto a baking sheet and roast in the oven for 45 minutes</li> <li>3. Saute the garlic and onions with 2 tablespoons of olive oil, butter, and red pepper flakes for 10 minutes until the onions start to turn brown. Add the chicken stock, thyme, basil, and canned tomatoes. Boil and simmer uncovered for 40 minutes. Use a blender until consistency is how you like it.</li> </ol>