

“SOUP IS LIKE A WARM BLANKET ON A COLD WINTER’S DAY.”

– UNKNOWN



## BITE by BITE

Conquering My Culinary Bucket List One Dish at a Time

By Emily Banks Wooten

“SOUP IS A LOT LIKE LIFE. IT’S ALL ABOUT WHAT YOU PUT INTO IT.”

– UNKNOWN

# Warming up with flavor

I had my first bowl of tomato basil soup at la Madeleine in The Galleria with my friend Julie many, many years ago. That bowl started a lengthy love affair that over time has resulted in tomato basil becoming my very favorite soup. I’ve tried several recipes

over the years but the very best hands-down, in my opinion, is Ina Garten’s. You may be familiar with her from her Food Network TV show, “The Barefoot Contessa.” There’s nothing difficult about this recipe. It comes together quickly and easily and abso-

lutely hits the spot on those winter days when you just can’t seem to get warm. The simple act of roasting the tomatoes adds so much depth of flavor.

And by all means, use fresh basil and thyme if you can. If that’s not possible, you can

use dried, but you’ll need to adjust the proportions. There are different schools of thought on the conversion of fresh herbs to dried herbs, but most places I searched agreed on a three-to-one ratio. In other words, one tablespoon of fresh herbs to one teaspoon

of dried herbs. I also found a handy ratio chart for the conversion of fresh herbs to dried herbs at <https://www.reluctantgourmet.com/converting-fresh-herbs-to-dried-ratios/> that is printable.

Give this a shot. I really think you’ll like it. ■



“SOUP IS A LOT LIKE A FAMILY. EACH INGREDIENT ENHANCES THE OTHERS; EACH BATCH HAS ITS OWN CHARACTERISTICS; AND IT NEEDS TIME TO SIMMER TO REACH FULL FLAVOR.”

– MARGE KENNEDY



## Ina Garten’s Roasted Tomato Basil Soup

From [foodnetwork.com](http://foodnetwork.com)

- 3 pounds ripe plum tomatoes, cut in half lengthwise (Roma tomatoes)
- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 1 ½ teaspoons freshly ground black pepper
- 2 cups chopped yellow onions (2 onions)
- 6 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 (28-oz.) can plum tomatoes, with their juice
- 4 cups fresh basil leaves, packed
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
- 1 quart chicken stock or water

• Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Toss together the tomatoes, ¼ cup olive oil, salt and pepper. Spread the tomatoes in one layer on a baking sheet and roast for 45 minutes.

• In an 8-quart stockpot over medium heat, sauté the onions and garlic with 2 tablespoons olive oil, the butter and red pepper flakes for 10 minutes, until the onions start to brown.

• Add the canned tomatoes, basil and thyme and chicken stock. Add the oven-roasted tomatoes, including the liquid on the baking sheet. Bring to a boil and simmer uncovered for 40 minutes.

• Pass through a food mill fitted with the coarsest blade. (See notes below.) Taste for seasonings. Serve hot or cold.

My notes:

– I substitute a can of petite diced tomatoes for the can of plum tomatoes.

– I use an immersion blender instead of a food mill.

