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October's Tasty Recipe List

The theme for October is foliage. Since neither you nor I eat leaves, I used the color of the leaves as my inspiration for this month's recipes. Visit www.take-it-outside.org for event listings, outdoor activities describing seasonal & natural events, a new recommended reading list each month, and much more!

Roasted Tomato & Basil Soup

12 large (about 4 pounds) tomatoes
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided
1/4 cup good-quality balsamic vinegar
12 large garlic cloves, peeled
Salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 cup chopped yellow onions
2 cups lightly packed fresh basil leaves
2 cups cold water



Preheat the oven to 500 degrees F.

Prepare the tomatoes, by stemming and quartering them. In a large bowl, mix the tomatoes, 1/4 cup of the oil, the vinegar, garlic, salt, and pepper, to taste. Spread the tomatoes out on a non-reactive baking sheet. Roast the tomatoes in the oven until very dark in spots, 35 to 40 minutes. Remove and allow to cool.

In a large saucepan over medium heat, combine remaining 1/4 cup oil, the onions, and a pinch of salt. Cook until the onions are very soft, 8 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the 2 cups basil leaves and sauté with the onions for about 1 minute.

Add the roasted tomatoes and water to the saucepan. Bring the mixture to a simmer and cook for 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Puree the tomato mixture in a blender. The mixture should be very smooth.

When ready to serve, pour the soup into a medium saucepan and bring it to a slow simmer over medium heat. This good with a bit of cream or sour cream as garnish.