



RICHARD'S ROASTED RED BELL PEPPER SOUP

6 red bell peppers cut into 2 inch chunks
1 cup chopped onion 1/2 tsp minced garlic
1/4 tsp dried thyme
1/2 tsp dried basil or 1 Tbs chopped fresh
2 Tbs minced jalapeno pepper
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
5 cups chicken stock

1/2 cup olive oil
1/2 cup diced tomato
1 Tbs fennel seed
1/2 bay leaf crumbled
pinch of sugar
1 tsp tomato paste
1/2 to 1 cup heavy cream

In a 4 quart heavy bottomed saucepan or Dutch oven heat olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion, fennel, basil, thyme, bay leaf and jalapeno. Reduce the heat to low and cook until the onion is translucent, about 10 to 15 minutes. Add flour and cook stirring constantly for 10 minutes. In a separate pot bring the chicken stock to a boil then pour over the vegetables and stir. Add the tomatoes and tomato paste. In a large skillet coat with olive oil over high heat. Sauté the bell pepper chunks until the skins blister and are lightly charred. Add the peppers to the soup and cook stirring occasionally for 20 minutes. Remove from heat and puree in a blender or food processor. Alternately you can use an immersion blender. Strain the soup through a mesh strainer or chinois. Return to saucepan and bring to a simmer and 1/2 cup of the cream and a pinch of sugar. If the soup is too spicy add more cream. At parties we serve these in demitasse or small coffee cups. For an elegant touch you can add a dollop of Sambuca Cream. In a bowl of an electric mixer, whip 1 cup heavy cream until soft peaks then add 1/2 tsp lemon juice, 1/4 tsp lemon zest, 3 Tbs Sambuca and a pinch of sugar. Serve with a rustic bread or by itself.

Enjoy!- Richard Cabbage

