

A Sutherland Belle

Creamy Roasted Mexican Red Pepper Soup with Pico de Guacamole

INGREDIENTS

For the Soup

- 3 large red bell peppers, cored, seeded, and cut into thick slices
- 4 medium vine-ripened or Roma tomatoes, cut in half or quarters depending on size
- 4 medium tomatillos, cut in half
- 2 poblano chilis, cut in half and seeds removed
- 1 large jalapeño, cut in half and seeds removed
- 1-2 large garlic bulbs, top cut off
- 1 large white or yellow onion, cut in half and then quartered (8 pieces per onion)
- 4 tablespoons olive oil (or more depending on coverage)
- Freshly ground salt and pepper
- 1 tablespoon Mexican oregano (regular oregano is fine if you cannot find it)
- 1 ½ teaspoons cumin
- 1 ½ teaspoons smoked paprika
- 1 ½ cups vegetable or chicken stock
- 1 cup packed fresh cilantro leaves and stems
- ½ cup Mexican crema or heavy whipping cream, optional
- 2 tablespoons butter, optional
- Freshly ground salt and pepper, to taste
- Garnish with Pico de Guacamole, Cotija cheese, and tortilla chips

For the Pico de Guacamole

- 3 large avocados, ripe
- 1 pound Roma tomatoes, (3-4 medium), diced and seeds removed
- ½ large onion (1 cup chopped)
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and finely minced
- 2 cloves garlic, finely minced
- ½ cup cilantro, chopped
- 2 tablespoons lime juice, from 1 lime
- ½ teaspoon salt, or to taste
- ½ teaspoon black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

For the Soup

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. Place red pepper, tomatoes, poblanos, tomatillos, jalapeños, onion, and garlic bulbs on the baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Season with salt and pepper; add Mexican oregano, cumin, and smoked paprika. Roast in the oven for 40-45 minutes.
2. Once tomatoes and garlic are done roasting, allow them to cool for 10 minutes. Remove garlic from the pan. Add vegetables and juices to a high-powered or hand-help immersion blender. Squeeze garlic from the bulb and add to the tomatoes, cilantro, and stock. Blend until smooth (this takes several minutes).
3. After blending, transfer to a colander over the pot and strain to remove the pulp. Return the pot to the stove and turn to medium-low heat. Add Mexican crema or heavy whipping cream and butter, (if using), and add salt and pepper to taste. Allow soup to simmer for 10 minutes before serving. Serve with Pico de Guacamole, Cotija cheese, and tortilla chips.

For the Pico de Guacamole

1. Slice the avocados in half, remove the pit, and scoop into a mixing bowl. I like to whisk my avocados for a creamier texture.
2. Add diced tomatoes, onion, jalapeno pepper, garlic, and chopped cilantro.
3. Stir in lime juice, salt, and black pepper (or season to taste). Enjoy as a topping for the soup or eat on the side with chips.