



Ottolenghi's Garlic Soup with Harissa

Yotam Ottolenghi

Plenty: Vibrant Recipes from London's Ottolenghi

Serves 4.

Ingredients

3 tbsp butter
2 tbsp olive oil
4 medium shallots, finely chopped
3 celery sticks, finely diced
25 garlic cloves (medium size), finely sliced
2 tsp chopped fresh ginger
1 tsp fresh thyme, finely chopped
1/2 tsp coarse sea salt
1 cup white wine
1 generous pinch saffron strands
4 bay leaves
1 litre good-quality liquid vegetable stock (not cubes)
4 tbsp parsley, roughly chopped
Fresh cilantro, roughly chopped (optional)
Greek yogurt (optional)

Directions

Gently fry shallots and celery until soft and translucent (about 10 minutes). Add the garlic and cook for five minutes more. Stir in ginger and thyme, add salt, pour in the wine and leave to bubble for a few minutes. Add the saffron, bay leaves and stock, and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove the bay leaves, add the parsley and blitz with a hand-held liquidiser (immersion blender). Do not over-process - keep some texture.

The harissa:

Ingredients

1 red pepper
1/4 tsp coriander seeds
1/4 tsp cumin seeds
1/4 tsp caraway seeds
1/2 tbsp olive oil
1 small red onion, roughly chopped
3 garlic cloves, roughly chopped

2 medium-hot fresh red chillies, seeded and roughly chopped
1/2 tbsp tomato paste
2 tbsp lemon juice
2 to 3 tsp coarse sea salt

Directions

Put the pepper under a very hot grill until blackened (15-20 minutes). Transfer to a bowl, cover with saran wrap (or "*clingfilm*" as the British say), leave to cool. Then peel and discard the skin and seeds. Place a dry frying pan on a low heat and lightly dry toast the coriander, cumin and caraway for two minutes. Transfer to a mortar and grind to a powder. Heat the oil in a frying pan and fry the onion, garlic and chillies over medium heat until dark and smoky - six to eight minutes. Cool slightly, then tip into a blender or food processor. Add the remaining harissa ingredients, including the grilled pepper and ground spices, and blitz together to make a paste. Set aside until you are ready to use it.