

Tomato Soup with Fennel Seeds and Orange

(serves 8 as a starter)



- 2 Tbs. olive oil or a combination of unsalted butter and oil
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cups shallots – finely chopped
- 2 tsp. garlic - minced
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup carrots – peeled, halved or quartered lengthwise, thinly sliced
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup celery – halved lengthwise, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp. fennel seed crushed
- 2 - 28oz. cans whole tomatoes – drained, coarsely chopped or crushed
- 5 cups broth – either: 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups lower-salt chicken broth plus 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups water OR vegetable broth
- 3 Tbs. orange juice
- 1 tsp. plus more to taste of Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 – 2 tsp. fresh basil or flat leaf parsley - chopped

- In a 4-6 quart saucepan or Dutch oven, heat 2 Tbs. oil over medium-low heat. When hot, add shallots, garlic carrots and celery and pinch of kosher salt.
- Stir well, cover, reduce heat on low. Cook, stirring occasionally till vegetables are softened 8-10 minutes.
- Stir in 1 tsp. kosher salt and crushed fennel seeds.
- Add tomatoes, broth, and orange juice. Stir well and bring to a simmer over medium heat.
- Cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally until vegetables are very tender and soup is flavorful – about 10-20 minutes.
- Take pan off heat. Let soup cool for 5 minutes.
- In batches, puree soup in blender - carefully.
- Wipe pan clean. Place soup back in pan.
- Season soup to taste with salt and pepper. Add garnish of chopped herbs, if using.