

OSHER COOKING CLASS #4 WITH JIM MYERS

Salmorejo

Chilled blended Spanish tomato soup

4 servings

INGREDIENTS

2 pounds tomatoes, halved crosswise

Four 1-inch-thick slices of white bread, such as ciabatta, crusts removed and bread cubed (1 1/2 cups)

1/4 teaspoon finely grated garlic

1 tablespoon sherry vinegar

1/4 cup smoked olive oil, plus more for drizzling (I add a teaspoon of smoked paprika to the oil)

Kosher salt

4 seedless green grapes, thinly sliced

1 tablespoon roasted almonds, chopped

1. Using a box grater, coarsely grate the cut sides of the tomato halves over a medium bowl until all that remains are the tomato skins; discard the skins. (you can also try brushing skins in olive oil and crisping in a slow (200 degree) oven) Add the bread cubes and toss with the tomatoes. Transfer the tomato mixture to a food processor and let stand for 15 minutes until the bread is soft.

2. Pulse the tomato mixture with the grated garlic and vinegar until smooth. With the machine on, gradually add in the 1/4 cup of smoked olive oil.

3. Strain the salmorejo through a fine sieve into a large bowl and season with salt. Cover and refrigerate until very cold, at least 1 hour or overnight.

4. Serve the soup in bowls and garnish with the grapes, almonds and a drizzle of smoked olive oil.

Thai Chilled Watermelon Soup with Crabmeat

INGREDIENTS

For soup

- 5 cups coarsely chopped seeded watermelon (from a 4-lb piece, rind discarded)
- 1 fresh lemongrass stalk or 1 T. tube paste
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped shallot
- 1 1/2 tablespoons finely chopped peeled fresh ginger
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped garlic
- 1 1/2 tablespoons mild olive oil
- 1 small hot green chile such as Thai or serrano, finely chopped (including seeds), or to taste
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice, or to taste
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, or to taste

For crab

- 10 oz jumbo lump crabmeat (2 cups), picked over
- 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 1/2 tablespoons mild olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon salt, or to taste

1. Purée watermelon in a blender until smooth and transfer to a bowl. (Don't wash blender.)
2. Discard 1 or 2 outer leaves of lemongrass and trim root end. Thinly slice lower 5 to 6 inches of stalk and then mince, discarding remainder.

3. Cook lemongrass, shallot, ginger, and garlic in oil in a 2-quart heavy saucepan over moderately low heat, stirring, until aromatics are pale golden, about 5 minutes. Add about one third of watermelon purée and simmer over moderate heat, stirring, 5 minutes.

4. Remove watermelon mixture from heat, then transfer to blender along with chile, lime juice, and salt and blend until smooth (use caution when blending hot liquids).

5. Add remaining watermelon purée and blend briefly. Season soup with more chile, lime juice, and salt if desired, blending if necessary. Pour soup through a sieve into a bowl, pressing on and then discarding any solids. Chill soup, uncovered, about 2 hours if serving cold, or reheat in cleaned saucepan.

Prepare crab:

1. Toss crabmeat with cilantro, oil, and salt.

2. Divide crab among 4 soup plates, mounding in center, and pour chilled or hot soup around it.