

# TOMATO SOUP

Creamy tomato soup is easy to make yourself and is a delicious way to start your Christmas meal



The tomato first made its way to Europe from South America and Mexico in the 16th century. It belongs to the same family as deadly nightshade and, as such, the tomato was considered to be poisonous until as recently as the 19th century. Whereas, in fact, it's actually the basis for a tasty starter.

## SERVES 4

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- 400g can chopped tomato
- Handful of basil leaf
- Pinch of bicarbonate of soda
- 600ml milk

## METHOD

- Heat the olive oil in a large pan, then tip in the onion and garlic. Cook over a moderate heat for about 5 minutes, until the onion has softened. Stir in the tomato purée, then pour in the chopped tomatoes and basil leaves, and bring up to the boil.
- Turn the heat down and leave to simmer for about 15 minutes until thick and full of flavour. If you like a smooth soup, blend the mixture at this point to form a smooth sauce. It can now be cooled and frozen for up to 1 month.
- To finish the soup, tip the tomato mixture into a pan. Spoon the baking soda into a small bowl and pour over 1 tbsp or so of the milk. Mix together until there are no lumps, then tip into the tomato mix and pour over the milk.
- Bring up to a boil (the mixture will froth but don't worry, the froth will go away). Gently simmer for about 5 minutes until ready to serve.

