

Cool Cucumber Soup

Ingredients

1 cup lightly packed crustless country bread cubes (about 1 inch), from 2 to 3 slices

3 Tbs. white balsamic vinegar

4 medium cucumbers, peeled, seeded, and coarsely chopped (about 5-3/4 cups)

1 medium clove garlic, smashed

1/4 cup thinly sliced chives

2 cups light-color vegetable broth

1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil; more for serving

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

1/4 cup crème fraîche or sour cream, for serving

Sliced or quartered cherry tomatoes or red or green grapes, for serving (optional)

Method

Toss the bread cubes with the vinegar, and let soften about 20 minutes.

Pulse the cucumbers and garlic in a food processor until finely chopped. Transfer to a fine-mesh strainer, and let drain for 15 minutes. (Do not wash processor bowl; you'll use it again.)

Return the cucumbers to the food processor. Add all but 1 Tbs. of the chives, the bread, broth, and oil, and process until smooth, about 2 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Refrigerate to chill. Soup may be made up to this point 1 day ahead.

Serve topped with a drizzle of olive oil, a drizzle of crème fraîche, and the remaining chives. Garnish with tomatoes or grapes, if you like.

