

Slow cooker tomato soup

1/2 cup red lentils
1/4 cup steel cut oats
2 medium tomatoes, chopped (or 10–12 cherry tomatoes, halved)
1 tablespoon chicken-style broth powder
1 tablespoon nutritional yeast
10 basil leaves, torn
1 teaspoon smoked paprika
salt and white pepper

4 medium tomatoes, quartered (or 20–25 cherry tomatoes, halved)
1 large shallot or red torpedo onion, quartered
olive oil
balsamic vinegar
large pinch kosher salt
large pinch turbinado sugar

nutmeg
agave
crostini or croutons, optional

In a 2- or 3-quart slow cooker, combine the first seven ingredients (red lentils through smoked paprika) with 2 1/2 cups of water and set to low. Allow everything to cook for six hours, stirring occasionally and adding more water if needed. You want enough liquid to purée everything easily at the end, but not so much that it will be watery. When the six hours have passed, purée everything until smooth and season with salt and white pepper to taste. Keep the base warm in your slow cooker until the roasted vegetables are ready.

When your slow cooker has about an hour to go, preheat your oven to 375 F / 190 C. In a baking dish, arrange the quartered tomatoes and shallot, cut sides up, in a single layer. Drizzle with oil and vinegar, then sprinkle on the salt and sugar. Roast until the tomatoes have caramelized and their juices are concentrated.

Combine the puréed base and the caramelized tomatoes, shallots and their juices in a blender or food processor (in multiple batches, if necessary) and purée until completely smooth, adding water if needed.

Garnish with a drizzle of agave and fresh grated nutmeg, and serve with small crostini or croutons.

Yield: 2–4 servings, depending on course and appetite

Prep time: 10 minutes | Slow cooking time: 6 hours (mostly unattended) | Roasting time: 30–45 minutes