

Farmers Market Roasted Vegetable Soup with Cashew Pesto

For the soup:

2 leeks, white and pale green parts, finely chopped
4 carrots, peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
2 zucchini, cut into 2-inch pieces
2 eggplant, cut into 2-inch pieces
2 large tomatoes, quartered (heirloom variety if available)
2 sweet potatoes (about 10 oz./315 g), peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
3 1/2 cups – 4 cups (36 fl. oz./1.1 l) vegetable broth, plus more as needed
2 Tbs. olive oil
Salt and freshly ground pepper
2 Tbs. finely chopped fresh basil
2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice

For the pesto:

1/3 cup (2 oz./60 g) cashews
3 garlic cloves
2 cups (2 oz./60 g) packed fresh basil leaves
1/2 cup (4 fl. oz./125 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and freshly ground pepper

Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C).

In a large, heavy roasting pan, combine the leeks, carrots, zucchini, eggplant, tomatoes and potatoes. Add 1/2 cup of the broth and the oil, season with salt and pepper, and mix until the vegetables are well coated. Roast, turning once, until the vegetables are softened, about 40 minutes.

While the vegetables are roasting, make the pesto: In a blender or food processor, combine the cashews and garlic and process until finely chopped. Add the basil leaves and process until coarsely chopped. With the motor running, add the olive oil in a steady stream and process until a thick green sauce forms. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Remove from the vegetables from the oven and let cool slightly. Working in batches, puree the vegetables with 1/2 cup of the broth. Transfer to a large saucepan and stir in the remaining 3 to 3 1/2 cups broth, the basil and lemon juice. If needed, add more broth to achieve the desired consistency. Cook over low heat for 3 minutes to blend the flavors. Season with salt and pepper and ladle into individual bowls. Add a dollop of the pesto to each bowl and serve immediately. Serves 4 to 6.