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COULIS DE TOMATES À LA PROVENÇALE (TOMATO SAUCE WITH MEDITERRANEAN FLAVORS)

Adapted from "Mastering the Art of French Cooking" by Julia Child (Knopf, 1961)

Time: About 1½ hours

- ¼ cup olive oil**
- ⅔ cup minced yellow onions**
Kosher salt and black pepper
- 4 teaspoons all-purpose flour**
- 5 to 6 pounds ripe tomatoes,**
quartered
- ⅛ teaspoon sugar, more to taste**
- 4 cloves garlic, minced or put**
through a press
A large herb bouquet: 8 sprigs
parsley, 1 bay leaf and 4 sprigs
thyme, all tied in cheesecloth
- ¼ teaspoon fennel seeds**
- ½ teaspoon dried basil, oregano,**
marjoram or savory
Large pinch saffron threads
- 1 dozen coriander seeds, lightly**

crushed

- 1 2-inch piece dried orange peel (or**
½ teaspoon granules)
- 2 to 3 tablespoons tomato paste**
(optional).

1. In a large heavy pot, heat the oil over medium-low heat. Add onions, sprinkle with salt and cook slowly for about 10 minutes, until tender but not browned. Sprinkle on flour and cook slowly for 3 minutes, stirring occasionally; do not brown.

2. Meanwhile, fit a food processor with the coarse grating blade. Working in batches, push tomatoes through feed

tube to make a coarse purée.

3. Stir tomatoes, sugar, garlic, herb bouquet, fennel, basil, saffron, coriander, orange peel and 1 teaspoon salt into pot. Cover and cook slowly for 10 minutes, so the tomatoes will render their juice. Uncover and simmer for about an hour, until thick. The sauce is done when it tastes cooked and is thick enough to form a mass in the spoon. Remove herb bouquet and taste. Season with salt, pepper, sugar and tomato paste, and simmer two minutes more. Sauce may be used immediately, refrigerated or frozen for up to 6 months.

Yield: About 1 quart.