



TOMATO SOUP & OPEN-FACED GRILLED CHEESE

MACROS | SERVING SIZE
Protein 23 g | Fat 16 g | Carbs 60 g

% CALORIES OF MACROS | SERVING SIZE
Calories 456 | Protein 20% | Fat 31% | Carbs 50%

NUTRIENTS | SERVING SIZE
Fiber 15 g | Sodium 734 mg | Sat. Fat 8 g

INGREDIENTS (SERVES 4)

- 1 large yellow or white onion, diced
- 2 large carrots, diced
- ¼ tsp. sugar
- 2 butter, unsalted
- 3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- 1-2 tsp. balsamic vinegar
- 2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 14-15 ounce can of cannellini or great northern beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 14-15 ounces cans of low-sodium whole or crushed tomatoes, drained
- 3 cups fresh baby spinach leaves, unpacked
- 2 dashes black pepper
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 4 slices whole wheat bread
- 4 oz. shredded cheddar cheese

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 375 Degrees F.

In a large pot over medium heat, bring the butter to temperature and add the onion, salt and pepper. Cook the onions string constantly until they begin to turn clear and add the sugar. Cook stirring constantly until the onion begins to brown. Add just a few drops of broth to prevent burning and sticking. Once they are light brown, add the carrots and a little bit more broth for about 8-10 minutes or until the carrots just begin to become tender. Add the garlic and thyme and cook for just a few seconds, to bring out the flavor of the garlic and herbs but not burn.

Add the remaining broth, tomatoes. Add the beans and bring to a slow boil. Turn down the heat to medium low and simmer for 5 minutes. Meanwhile, place sliced bread on a baking sheet in a single layer and sprinkle each slice evenly with cheese. Place in the oven and bake until cheese is melted and the bottom side is a bit toasted (about 8 minutes).

Gently pour half of the soup in a blender and add half of the spinach and puree until smooth. Add remaining soup and spinach and repeat. Serve ¼ of soup in a bowl with a piece of cheese toast.

NOTES

An immersion blender can be used. Just remove the pot from the heat and add the spinach. Let it wilt some and then use the blender to puree until smooth.

The nutrition analysis is based on the yield of drained canned beans and the use of low-sodium, canned broth and tomatoes.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends most healthy Americans over the age of 14 years to limit sodium consumption to less than 2,300 milligrams per day. For those under 14 years, the limit is lower. This is because overconsumption can increase the risk of high-blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, blindness and kidney disease, etc. According to the USDA, the average daily consumption of sodium per day is 3,400 mgs, which is roughly 1.7 times greater than the limit.

Most likely many do not realize how much sodium they are consuming, because they believe they are keeping their overall intake in-check, by not over seasoning their food with table salt. Yet, salt and sodium are two different things. Sodium is a chemical element while salt is a compound made up of roughly 60 percent sodium with the remaining being chloride.

The element sodium is what needs to be limited and it is hidden in many foods. Just because something tastes salty does not mean it is high in sodium. Many foods that are bland, such as canned vegetables, canned legumes, and sauces are high in sodium because it is used as a way to preserve food. This is the same for deli and other cured meats.

A key way to keep sodium in check is to look at the Nutrition Facts Label on food packages and choose the lowest sodium option of the items. Our Dietitian Approved Thumb can guide you too. The difference between one item and another can be substantial. Cooking more meals at home let's you choose the ingredients and use other types of seasoning to flavor food. To assist with bringing the sodium level down in canned foods, consider draining and rinsing them.

This meal features many canned items so while the purchasing ingredients compare the sodium level of various options for each item and drain and rinse the beans. Also, if you like, to add a bit of flavor, add a dash of salt in each bowl after serving.

DIETITIAN TIP

While preparing casseroles and soups, do not add the salt while cooking. Taste the finish product at the table and if needed add just a dash of salt.

For more recipes and nutrition education information visit [COMMISSARIES.COM/HEALTHY-LIVING](https://www.commissaries.com/healthy-living)

