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DONNA ERICKSON'S BEST BITES

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PHOTO CREDIT: Donna Erickson



Bring Home a Taste of Spain with Healthy No-Cook Gazpacho

Spain is one country that's on our minds with the ongoing 2026 FIFA World Cup, so why not prepare gazpacho for a "Euro Summer" feel at home? Plus, it's so easy to stir up a no-cook meal for your family on a hot July day!

The season's freshest tomatoes, cukes, peppers and onions come together in this satisfying and zesty cold Spanish soup. Let your kids harvest some of the ingredients from your family garden, or choose them in peak condition at a farmer's market. Teach your school-age children basic cutting and chopping techniques. They'll have lots of practice with this recipe!

If you don't mind turning on your oven for a few minutes, top off the soup with whimsical kid-made croutons in fun shapes. Serve it in the fanciest bowl that you normally use for special occasions. For 4-6 servings, here's what you'll need:

GAZPACHO

- 2 cups seeded, finely diced plum tomatoes
- 1 cup cored, seeded, finely diced yellow bell peppers
- 1/2 cup peeled, seeded, finely diced cucumbers
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup finely diced celery
- 1/4 cup minced carrots
- 1/4 cup minced celery leaves
- 1/4 cup minced yellow onion

- 2 cups tomato vegetable juice (such as V8)
- 1/2 cup clam juice (optional)
- 2 tablespoons minced chives
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- Juice of one lemon
- Salt and pepper to taste

Let your child mix all the ingredients together in a large bowl. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours to chill and enhance the flavor. Scoop into a serving bowl and top with shaped croutons.

SHAPED CROUTONS

- 1 loaf French bread, sliced lengthwise with crust removed
- 3 tablespoons butter or olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, pressed
- 1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese (optional)
- Salt and pepper to taste



Make shapes from bread with your favorite mini cookie cutters. Combine melted butter or olive oil with garlic and salt and pepper. Brush on top of cutout bread pieces. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese (optional). Bake in an oven set to 350 F for 10 minutes.

Cook's Tip: Put freezer-safe serving bowls for gazpacho in the freezer before serving!

Donna Erickson creates relationships and community through food and fun. Find more to nourish and delight you at www.donnaerickson.com.

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