



Roasted Red Pepper Soup w/ Seared Scallops

4 large red bell peppers, stems removed
3 tbl. extra-virgin olive oil
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 tsp. ground cumin
¼ tsp. crushed red pepper
1 quart low-sodium chicken broth
½ cup fresh orange juice
¼ tsp. grated orange zest
1 tbl. fresh lemon juice
¼ tsp. grated lemon zest
3 tbl. chopped cilantro
salt and pepper
8 large sea scallops

Char the red peppers over a gas flame, constantly turning until black all around, 10-15 minutes. If you don't have a gas stove put the peppers on a cookie sheet, stemmed side down and bake at 425 for 45 minutes, or until the skins are black. When the peppers are cool enough to handle, remove and discard the skins, cores and seeds. Finely dice 2 of the peppers, reserve for garnish.

In a large saucepan, heat 2 tbl. of the olive oil. Add the garlic, onion, cumin and crushed red pepper and cook over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally until the onion is softened, about 10 minutes. Add the whole roasted peppers and the chicken broth and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for 20 minutes. Add the orange and lemon juice, lemon and orange zest and 2 tbl. cilantro.

In a blender, purée the soup in batches. Return the soup to the saucepan and season with salt and pepper. Keep hot.

In a medium skillet heat the remaining 1 tbl. of olive oil until shimmering. Season the scallops with salt and pepper. Add the scallops to the skillet and cook over high heat until richly browned on the bottom, about 2 minutes. Turn the scallops and cook on the second side for 1 minute. Ladle the soup into bowls, garnish with the scallops, cilantro and diced peppers and serve. Makes 8 servings as a starter, or 4 servings as a main course.

As a variation, make the soup a day ahead of serving. After you puree the soup put it into a container and put into the refrigerator. The next day serve cold as a starter, garnished with cilantro, diced peppers and a crouton. The scallops can be omitted.

Any way you serve this, the Cedar Mountain 2007 Livermore Valley Reserve Rosé of Pinot Noir will go quite nicely with this soup.

I found this recipe in the Food and Wine Magazine September 2006 issue. I changed it a little bit. Hope you enjoy! Lori