

THE LITTLE GERANIUM RECIPES

Bend it like Beckham! | Steven's fresh Tomato Fondue

Background Story

I had just launched The Lowry in Manchester with a grand opening by Her Majesty the Queen, fantastic fireworks and amazing canapés and so I was feeling pretty satisfied with myself. The Lowry was the main UK Millennium project for the North of England. The food at The Lowry restaurant was going to be simple with the key and focus on everything homemade but simply put together. We had things like beef bourguignon, steak pie cooked with oysters & ale and fish and chips cooked in a tempura batter with a beautiful tomato dip made from roasting the tomatoes with garlic and onions.

It was a wet and windy lunchtime and as I looked at the newly built bridge that connected us to Trafford Park, I could see a couple walking towards us that looked familiar. It was David and Victoria Beckham. Hello David and welcome, I said. Hi Steve, you got a table? It was really busy but of course I had a table, this was David Beckham for Christ's sake!

On order I shouted, one house salad with dressing on the side and one fish & chips. I guessed that David would be having the fish and chips as Victoria was (and is) renowned for not eating much! Now seeing that our USP was that everything was homemade I had banned things like Heinz ketchup, daddies sauce and chosen to make my own similar but better alternatives. Our brown sauce was made with fresh tamarind and star anise and wine vinegar and our tomato sauce was amazing.

Is everything Ok for you David? I asked. Yes, Steve but what is this? David replied pointing at the tomato sauce. It's a fresh tomato fondue made with good heritage tomatoes garlic and fresh basil. I proudly responded. Bring me some ketchup will you, Heinz please he demanded. So off I went to the kitchen and shouted to a young chef, quickly get me some Heinz Ketchup from the local shop ASAP! But chef you said you would not serve bottled sauces, he replied. Shut it and do as I say.... (this is David Beckham!)

So David got his ketchup and we had a rethink on all those homemade sauces, we still carried on serving them but always had a Heinz standby!

Anyway all the foodies loved our fresh tomato fondue, so here is the recipe which served with fish and chips is great but it is also great with simple roasted chicken, grilled fish and even a steak. There is something very satisfying about making your own whatever David thinks so try it and enjoy it. It's also a great dinner party story!

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Ingredients

- 1 onion peeled and chopped
- 6 ripe good quality red tomatoes blanched and peeled (skinless)
- 2 cloves garlic peeled and sliced
- 1 stick of celery sliced thinly
- half a red pepper sliced thinly
- Pinch of fresh cumin
- Drizzle of olive oil
- Maldon salt and white pepper
- 2 tablespoons of tomato puree paste or tomato frito
- 1 tablespoon of orange honey (or plain honey)
- A good handful of fresh basil leaves finely shredded

Method

- Blanch the tomatoes in boiling water in a saucepan (with a little cross on the top with a sharp knife) and leave for 10 seconds immediately remove and chill in iced cold water
- Peel the skin off and slice the tomatoes in half and put on a baking tray
- Put the garlic, olive oil, celery and pepper slices on top and season with salt pepper, cumin.
- Roast in a pre-heated oven (160c) for approx. 8 -10mins until soft and juicy
- Blend in a food processor to a puree
- Put the tomato paste (frito) in a thick bottomed sauce pan and then stir in the fresh puree
- Cook on a moderate heat for approx. 30 mins until reduced and thick
- Taste and adjust seasoning and stir in the honey and finish by topping or stirring in the fresh basil.