Tía's Spicy Tomato Soup

Nothing goes better with a tasty grilled cheese sandwich than a side of tomato soup, and there is no better tomato soup than Tía's Spicy Tomato Soup. Tía wouldn't let me write a flowery recipe description. She said, and I quote her here, "¡Sal de la cocina! ¡Me estás molestando!" (Get out of the kitchen! You're bugging me!)

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- ½ cup orzo (optional)
- 2 pounds ripe tomatoes, quartered
- · 1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped
- I habanero chile, whole, pierced 4-5 times with a knife
- · 1 cinnamon stick
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon black pepper
- 3 cups water, divided

DIRECTIONS:

- 1. (Optional: This soup is delicious without orzo.) In a large pot over medium heat, combine 1 tablespoon of olive oil and 1/2 cup orzo. Cook, stirring regularly, until golden brown. Transfer to a bowl and set aside.
- 2. Next, add to the pot 1 tablespoon olive oil, the tomatoes, the yellow onion, habanero pepper, cinnamon stick, sugar, salt, pepper, andwater. Bringto asimmer, stirring occasionally, until the tomatoes and onions are softened, about 20 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool uncovered for about 15 minutes.
- Remove the habanero pepper from the soup. If you'd like spicier soup, squeeze the pepper so that it's juices fall into the pot, then discard the pepper. Also remove and discard the cinnamon stick.
- 4. Working in batches, transfer the soup mixture to a blender, filling it no more than two-thirds full. Blend on low, then increase to high and blend until smooth, about 1 minute. Return the purée to your pot, add 2 more cups of water and bring to a simmer.
- 5. (Optional) Once the soup is simmering, add the toasted orzo to the soup and cook, stirring occasionally, until the orzo is nice and tender.
- 6. Serve with your grilled cheese sandwich.

MY NOTES: *	

^{*} Keep this recipe a secret from your mother-in-law. Also, hide it from your ultra-competitive neighbor, or that friend that's a big time one-upper. They don't need additional ammunition. This is now your recipe. Use it wisely. If you must share, impress your friends by sending them to www.UncleQueso.com, and recommend they download a recipe card there. And don't forget to suggest they make a small donation to support the ongoing search for the perfect grilled cheese sandwich.

