

Melon Gazpacho with Ham Crostini

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Servings: 4

1/2 to 1 serrano chile pepper, halved lengthwise and seeded
1 large clove garlic
1 yellow or orange bell pepper, sliced into 1/4-inch-thick rounds
1/2 sweet onion, sliced into 1/4-inch-thick rounds
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 baguette cut into eight slices
7 cups cantaloupe chunks
1/4 cup white balsamic vinegar
Kosher salt
freshly ground pepper
1/4 cup jarred aioli OR mayonnaise
2 ounces serrano ham or prosciutto, thinly sliced
1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped

Preparation Time: 30 minutes

Preheat a grill or grill pan to medium.

Place four soup bowls in the freezer.

Thread the chile and garlic on a skewer. Brush the chile-garlic skewer, bell pepper and onion with one tablespoon of olive oil. Grill until well marked, about 4 minutes per side. Add the bread halfway through and grill until toasted, about 2 minutes per side.

Transfer the grilled pepper, onion, chile and garlic to a blender. Add six cups of the cantaloupe, the vinegar and two tablespoons of olive oil. Puree until smooth. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer the soup to a medium bowl set inside a large bowl of ice to chill. Refrigerate, stirring occasionally, until cold, at least 10 minutes.

While the soup chills, spread the aioli on the grilled bread and top with the ham. Finely dice the remaining one cup of cantaloupe.

Serve the soup in the chilled bowls and top with the diced cantaloupe, parsley and a few grinds of pepper. Drizzle with the remaining olive oil.

Serve with the ham crostini.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 127 Calories; 14g Fat (93.9% calories from fat); trace Protein; 2g Carbohydrate; trace Dietary Fiber; 0mg Cholesterol; 3mg Sodium. Exchanges: 1/2 Vegetable; 2 1/2 Fat.