Skagit Valley Savory Strawberry & Red Wine Soup
Ingredients

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Serves 4

Ingredients

3/4 pound fresh seasonal strawberries, rinsed and hulled
1 cup red wine (preferably Washington Syrah)
2 tablespoons clover honey
5 grinds black pepper
1 clove garlic, halved
3–4 sprigs of basil
1 teaspoon thyme leaves
1/2 cup whole crème fraîche, whipped
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 cheesecloth

Directions

1. Set aside four large strawberries for garnish. Halve the remaining strawberries, and cut the halves across into ½-inch pieces.

2. Pour the wine into a medium bowl, add the honey, and stir until the honey is dissolved. Add the strawberries and pepper. Put the garlic, half the basil and the thyme leaves in a cheesecloth and add it to the wine. Refrigerate to marinate for 2 hours (not much longer or the infused flavors will become quite strong).

3. Shortly before serving, put the crème fraîche in a medium-sized bowl, and whip to blend and form a smooth mixture. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper.

4. To serve, discard the cheese cloth from the strawberries. Mince the remaining basil, and stir it into the soup. Set the reserved strawberries cut side down on the chopping board. Cut each strawberry in 1/8- inch slices, keeping the slices together as you go. Use your fingers to gently slide the slices away from one another to form a strip of partly overlapping slices 3–4 inches long. Set each sliced strawberry upright in an arc to one side of a chilled, shallow soup bowl. Spoon the soup into the bowls and top each soup with a dollop of the crème fraîche. Set a tuile cookie on top so that its broad end rests on the crème fraîche, the tip extending over the side of the bowl. Serve immediately.