

# MINIMUM BASIL

TYPE:	Tender Annual
SUN:	Full Sun
HEIGHT:	6 inches
GROWING IT:	Moist well-drained soil. Protect from wind and cold. Space 12 to 18 inches apart. Can be planted in containers.
PARTS USED:	Leaves
HARVEST:	Pick leaves throughout the summer. For drying and freezing pick before plant goes to bloom.
CULINARY:	Extensively used in Italian dishes, especially pesto, sauces, fresh tomato salads, and pizza toppings. Also used in some meat dishes, vegetables, and soups.

## TRY IT!

### ROASTED TOMATO BASIL SOUP

- 3 lbs. ripe Roma tomatoes, cut in half lengthwise
- ¼ c. olive oil
- 1 Tbs. salt
- 1 ½ tsp. ground pepper
- 2 Tbs. olive oil
- 2 c. chopped onions
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ tsp. red pepper flakes
- 28 oz. can plum tomatoes and juice
- 2 c. torn fresh basil leaves
- 1 tsp. thyme
- 4 c. chicken stock

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Toss tomatoes with oil, salt, and pepper. Spread in one layer on baking sheet and roast for 45 minutes. In a large pot over medium heat, heat 2 Tbs. oil, sauté onions, garlic, and red pepper flakes until onions start to turn brown. Add canned tomatoes, basil, thyme, and chicken stock. Add oven-roasted tomatoes, including any liquid on baking sheet. Bring to a boil and simmer, uncovered for 40 minutes. Puree in batches to a coarse mixture. Serve hot or cold with a dollop of sour cream and chopped chives.