

## **Sopa de Fideo**

(Vermicelli Soup)

SERVES 4-6

Fideo (or fideos) noodles are very thin and short enough to fit into a soup spoon. Vermicelli pasta may be substituted. (This and all other recipes in this story come from Josefina Velázquez de León's cookbooks.)

**1 ripe tomato, cored and halved crosswise**  
**1 medium white onion, peeled and chopped**  
**1 clove garlic, peeled**  
**2 tbsp. lard**  
**1 cup 1" fideo noodles (see page 103)**  
or vermicelli (broken into pieces  
approximately 1" in length)  
**8 cups chicken stock**  
**1 sprig fresh parsley**  
**Salt and freshly ground black pepper**  
**6 oz. queso fresco or dried pressed**  
**farmers' cheese, crumbled (see page 103)**

**1.** Preheat oven to 375°. Roast tomatoes, cut side up, in a small roasting pan in oven until lightly browned, about 30 minutes. Transfer tomatoes to a blender. Add onions and garlic and purée until mixture is a smooth loose paste. Strain through a fine sieve, discarding the liquid, and set tomato mixture aside.

**2.** Heat lard in a heavy medium pot over medium-high heat. Add noodles and fry, stirring frequently, until golden, about 1 minute. Transfer noodles with a slotted spoon to a dish and set aside.

**3.** Carefully add tomato mixture to remaining lard in pot and cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until thickened, about 1 minute. Stir in toasted noodles, stock, and parsley and season to taste with salt and pepper. Bring to a boil and reduce heat to medium-low. Simmer soup for 15-20 minutes. Adjust seasonings.

**4.** Remove and discard parsley sprig from pot. Serve soup garnished with crumbled cheese, if you like.