PROVENCAL GOAT CHEESE GRATIN

SERVES 8

Sauce:*
6 medium tomatoes
2 Tablespoons olive oil
2 large cloves garlic, minced
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Gratin:
10 ounces soft goat cheese (rindless)
2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves, minced
2 teaspoons fresh oregano leaves, minced or a pinch of dried
20 black olives (such as French Nyons), pitted and quartered

1. Bring a medium pot of water to a boil and turn off the heat. Score the bottom of the tomatoes and place in the water for 30 seconds. Remove the tomatoes with a slotted spoon. Peel the tomatoes, cut in half around the “equator,” remove the seeds and finely chop.
2. Warm the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic and sauté for one minute. Add tomatoes, salt and pepper to taste and cook until slightly thickened, about 3-5 minutes.
3. Preheat the broiler.
4. Crumble the cheese on the bottom of a 10-inch round baking dish. Sprinkle with half of the herbs. Spoon just enough tomato sauce to evenly coat the cheese. Sprinkle with the olives and the remaining herbs.
5. Place the baking dish under the broiler about 3 inches from the heat. Broil until the cheese is melted and fragrant, and the tomato sauce is sizzling, 2-3 minutes.
6. Serve with crackers, toast or flatbread.

*You can also substitute 1 ½ - 2 cups jarred tomato sauce for the fresh.