



Chef John's Panzanella



The key to this panzanella is frying the bread cubes in loads of olive oil in a skillet, which obviously makes them crispy. But the healthful fat also soaks into the bread cubes and renders them semi-waterproof, or dressing-proof. The same goes for the dusting of Parmesan cheese applied halfway through the crisping process.

By Chef John

Prep: 10 mins

Cook: 10 mins

Additional: 40 mins

Total: 1 hr

Servings: 2

Yield: 2 servings



Ingredients

2 cups 1/2-inch stale bread cubes, or more to taste

1/4 cup olive oil, or to taste

1/4 cup finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, or to taste

1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar, or more to taste

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, or more to taste

1/2 teaspoon minced garlic, or to taste

1 pinch white sugar

1 pinch salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

4 leaves fresh basil, thinly sliced, or more to taste

Directions

Step 1

Pour bread into a large skillet and drizzle with 1/4 cup olive oil, working in batches if necessary. Cook and stir bread over medium heat, adding more oil as needed, until bread cubes are golden and crispy on the outside, 7 to 12 minutes.

Step 2

Sprinkle Parmigiano-Reggiano over the top of the bread cubes; cook and stir until cheese is melted onto bread, and bread is crispy on the outside but still chewy on the inside, 3 to 4 minutes more. Cool completely.

Step 3

Combine tomatoes, red wine vinegar, extra virgin olive oil, garlic, sugar, salt, and black pepper together in a bowl until well-mixed. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and let sit at room temperature until flavors combine, about 20 minutes.

Step 4

Toss basil into tomato mixture; add bread cubes and stir. Let salad sit at room temperature 3 to 4 minutes; if the liquid is completely absorbed, add more vinegar and extra virgin olive oil to taste. Season with salt and black pepper.

Nutrition Facts

Per Serving:

745.5 calories; protein 17.5g 35% DV; carbohydrates 68.4g 22% DV; fat 45.8g 70% DV; cholesterol 8.8mg 3% DV; sodium 927mg 37% DV.

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