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Tomato-Basil crostini

By Susie Iventosch

Tomato-basil crostini

- 1 loaf country Italian bread, at least three inches across the loaf
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and sliced in half
- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon sea salt (or kosher salt)
- Pepper to taste
- Tomato-Basil-Parmesan Topping
- 4 vine ripened tomatoes (in the summer, heirloom tomatoes are excellent on these), dice tomatoes, or slice thinly
- 8 leaves fresh basil, cut into julienned slices
- 1/2 cup Greek or kalamata olives, drained and cut into quarters
- 3-4 ounces Parmesan cheese (we use a potato peeler to get the large shaved pieces of Parmesan, but grated works nicely, too. Quantity of cheese is up to you!

Slice bread into 1/2 to 3/4 inch slices, (save heels for another use.) Place bread slices on an ungreased baking sheet, and toast in 350-degree oven for about 5 minutes, or just until toasted but not too crunchy. Flip slices over and toast the other side for two more minutes. Remove from oven and cool. Rub garlic over the tops of the bread slices, leaving little bits of garlic in the crusty tops of the bread. Place olive oil in a bowl and sprinkle sea salt and pepper over oil. Mix with a fork. Brush tops of toasts with light coating of olive oil. Now add your toppings. If you use tomatoes and basil, gently toss them in a separate bowl with the olives before placing atop bread slices. Lay Parmesan shavings on top, or sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese.

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