Bruschetta with Tomato and Basil

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 kg plum or roma tomatoes, ripe
- 2 cloves garlic (large), minced
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp balsamic vinegar
- 7 sprig fresh basil leaves sliced thinly
- 1 tsp kosher or sea salt
- 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- 1 french stick, baguette or sour dough bread
- 1/4 cups olive oil

Summary

Yield: 24
Prep Time: 1 hour
Category: Appetizers
Cuisine: Italian

Instructions

Bring 2 quarts of water to a boil. As the water is heating make shallow cuts in a cross pattern at the tip ends of the tomatoes (this will make the tomatoes easier to peel). Once the water is boiling, remove the pot from the heat. Put the tomatoes in the hot water and blanch for 1 minute. Remove with a slotted spoon and let sit until cool enough to handle. Then gently peel off the tomato skins. Cut out the stem base with a paring knife. Cut the tomatoes into halves or quarters and squeeze out most of the juices and seeds Preheat the oven to 450°F (230°C) with a rack in the top slot of the oven. Finely chop the tomatoes and place them in a medium bowl. Mix in the minced garlic, 1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil, and the balsamic vinegar. Stir in the thinly sliced basil and add salt and freshly ground black pepper, adding more to taste. Note, tomatoes love salt; you may need to add more than you expect. Use a bread knife to slice the baguette on the diagonal making half-inch thick slices. Brush one side of each slice with olive oil (a pastry brush helps here) and place olive oil-side down on a baking sheet or roasting pan. The baguette slices will toast best in the top rack of your oven, so you may need to work in batches to toast them all. When the oven has reached 450°F (230°C) place the slices in the oven on the top rack and toast for 5 to 6 minutes until lightly browned around the edges. If you want you can toast the bread slices without coating them first in olive oil. Toast them until lightly browned on both sides. Then cut a clove of garlic in half and rub over one side of the toast. Then brush with olive oil. Arrange the toasted bread on a platter, olive oil side facing up (the olive oil will help create a temporary barrier keeping the bread from getting soggy from the chopped tomatoes). Either serve the toasts plain with a bowl of the tomato bruschetta mixture on the side for people to top their own, or use a spoon to gently top each toasted bread slice with some of the tomato mixture. If you top each slice individually, do it right before serving.