

Walnut pesto tomato bruschetta

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Walnut pesto tomato bruschetta combines four my favorite things – juicy summer tomatoes, rich homemade walnut pesto, creamy fresh mozzarella and crunchy toasted bread.

This bruschetta recipe takes advantage of summer produce and it's easy to make at the last minute. Complete with plenty of ways to customize this recipe, you will be serving this Italian restaurant quality appetizer often.

Things to know about this walnut pesto tomato bruschetta

First making your own pesto is easy uses a few ingredients and keeps well refrigerated. I am using a mortar and pestle to pound the ingredients. Also I am using walnuts instead of pine nuts to keep this pesto recipe more affordable.

Also most crusty breads work in tis recipe. It needs a bread that can hold up to the toppings without becoming soggy. Which brings me to the next good thing to know about this tomato bruschetta recipe- by sautéing the bread on both sides the bread remains crisp.

One more good thing this recipe can be made in stages. Pesto is something every kitchen should have on hand Make extra and freeze it. You can toast the bread ahead of time and assemble the bruschetta with the pesto, cheese and tomatoes when your

ready to serve.

Ingredients

- 6 cloves of garlic
- 4 cups basil leaves
- 1 cup grated parmesan
- 1 cup walnuts
- 2 cups extra virgin olive oil
- 6 slices of crusty Italian bread
- 12 slices fresh mozzarella
- 12 slices heirloom tomatoes
- 4 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar

Instructions

1. In a mortar with a pestle add the garlic, basil and parmesan cheese. Pound until a smooth consistency. Slowly add the olive oil mixing vigorously until well incorporated,
2. Brush the bread slices on both sides with olive oil . In a saute pan over medium high heat saute the bread until golden brown on both sides. About 3 minutes per side.
3. Top the toasted bread first with the pesto then 2 slices of mozzarella top with 2 tomato slices. Drizzle with olive oil, balsamic vinegar and fresh basil. ENJOY!!

Vegetarian zucchini roll-ups

vegetarian zucchini roll-ups

These just picked summer garden zucchini roll-ups are first baked and then filled with a ricotta filling. Then topped with marinara sauce and more cheese before being baked again to a healthy, light deliciousness.

Zucchini makes an easy alternative to transform any dish into a healthier option and the perfect replacement for pasta. A good choice when your craving Italian and want healthy too.

Tips for perfect zucchini roll-ups

Slice the zucchini as thin as possible. You can do this by hand or use a mandoline slicer. In the video below you can see how I cut the zucchini using a knife.

Zucchini contains a lot of water. Baking the zucchini before filling draws much of the moisture out. This step also helps soften it.

And lastly, I used zucchini from my garden in this recipe. If you don't have access to your own garden store-bought is fine. It's the time of year when fresh zucchini is readily available and affordable.

Ingredients

- 3 zucchini
- 4 cups marinara sauce
- 3 cups ricotta cheese
- 1 cup grated parmesan
- 2 cups chopped spinach
- 1/2 cup breadcrumbs
- 1 egg
- salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Start by slicing the zucchini length wise as thin as possible using a knife. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil salt and pepper to taste. roast the zucchini in a preheated 375-degree oven for 10 minutes.
 2. Mean while make the filling by mixing the rest of the ingredients except for the marinara sauce.
 3. line an oven proof casserole dish with half of the marinara sauce. Put one Tbsp. of the cheese filling in the center of each of the zucchini slices. roll jell roll style. Place the zucchini rolls on top of the marinara sauce top with the remaining marinara, Top with additional parmesan cheese.
 4. Bake in a preheated 375-degree oven for 45 minutes.
ENJOY!!!!
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Quick zucchini ricotta pasta

Quick zucchini ricotta pasta

I like making really simple pastas in the summer that highlight a main fresh seasonal ingredient. Not only is this zucchini and ricotta pasta recipe quick, it highlights one of the most prolific summer vegetables, zucchini.

This vegetarian summer pasta dish combines garden fresh zucchini, cherry tomatoes with creamy light ricotta and the fresh taste of lemon for a pasta dish everyone will love. and the best part, the sauce is essentially ready when the pasta is cooked. What's not to love?

Variations for this quick pasta dish

This quick zucchini ricotta pasta recipe is a versatile dish, that can be adapted to a number of variations.

One would be if you don't have or like ricotta use a good farmer cheese. If you want to add in more vegetables add in 2 cups of chopped spinach. It's a great vegetarian pasta on it's own , but if you want to add cooked chicken or shrimp.

Of course pasta choice is always an option. You can use any pasta shape you like. I like using small shaped pasta in this recipe. the pasta in this recipe is anelli (Italian for small rings) . I love this classic Italian pasta shape. It can be hard to find . I ordered it on Amazon. I have attached the link.

Lastly if you make this easy, and quick summer pasta dish please leave me comment. I love hearing from you. It's my favorite part!!!

Ingredients

- 1/2 lb. small shaped pasta
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 4 Tbsp chopped shallots or onion
- 1 zucchini sliced thin
- 2 cups cherry tomatoes
- 2 cups ricotta
- 1 cup pasta water
- juice and zest from 1 lemon

- 1/2 cup grated parmesan
- 2 Tbsp.. chopped Italian parsley

Instructions

1. cook your pasta el dente while making the sauce
 2. start by cutting the zucchini into medium dice
 3. In a saute pan over medium high heat in the olive oil saute the garlic and shallots until soft and translucent. Then add the zucchini and tomatoes and cook until tomatoes start to burst and zucchini is crisp tender.
 4. Add the pasta water and lemon juice and zest. Simmer until sauce thickens about 10 minutes. Then add the ricotta and grated parmesan. Cook just until all ingredients are well combined. Add in the pasta top with Italian parsley. ENJOY!!!
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Grilled Italian vegetable panini

Grilled Italian vegetable panini

This grilled vegetable panini sandwich is made with a combination of grilled summer vegetables, creamy fresh mozzarella on pesto lined Italian bread then the entire sandwich is grilled to golden brown goodness, for an easy

satisfying summer meal that's totally vegetarian.

There is something about lightly charred summer grilled vegetables sandwiched together with creamy fresh mozzarella that is just so good.

I love a good Italian panini sandwich something that's easy to put together and delicious.

Tips and tricks when you make Grilled Italian vegetable panini

1. Vegetables: I used eggplant, zucchini and red bell peppers they are easy to grill and have so much flavor. You can customize this veggie panini by adding or subtracting your favorite vegetable .
2. Pesto: I used homemade pesto if you want a short cut use a good quality store-bought pesto.
3. Bread: A good sandwich starts with good bread. I love a crusty sliced Italian bread but your favorite sliced bread will work great in this recipe. Sliced ciabatta is another great choice.
4. The grill: I use a cast iron indoor grill pan(one of my most used pan) but the vegetables can be grilled on an outside grill along with your BBQ.

Ingredients

- 4 slices Italian bread
- 1 eggplant
- 2 zucchini
- 1 red bell pepper
- 4 slices fresh mozzarella
- 1/2 cup pesto
- 2 Tbsp. butter

Instructions

1. Using a kitchen knife Slice the eggplant, red bell pepper and zucchini into thin slices. Then sprinkle with the Italian herbs, salt, pepper and drizzle with extra virgin olive oil
 2. On a preheated indoor or out grill grill the vegetables until cooked and slightly charred.
 3. Spread the bread slices with the pesto
 4. Assemble the panini by lining with the vegetables and cheese. Add the butter to a flat pan. Grill the sandwiches until golden brown on both sides about 5 minutes per side. using a spatula to press the sandwich flat. ENJOY !!!
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Vegetarian zucchini lasagna

Vegetarian zucchini lasagna

I love a classic lasagna but when my garden is overflowing with zucchini this is vegetarian zucchini lasagna starts showing up on my table. With layers of roasted zucchini marinara and three kinds of cheese, this recipe is full of flavor everyone loves.

It's a great recipe when you are craving Italian and want low-carb too. Also a good recipe for batch cooking. Make a double batch bake one and freeze one. It can be frozen before or after baking, then thawed out and baked when you are ready to serve.

Three tips for success when making vegetarian zucchini lasagna

To keep the lasagna from being watery because of the high water content in the zucchini first salt the zucchini and let it sit for at least 30 minutes to extract the liquid. then pat dry with paper towels before roasting . Roasting also helps to extract the water.

Another step to prevent watery vegetable lasagna is to bake the lasagna uncovered for 70% of the cooking time. This allows the steam to escape.

Here is the link for the lasagna casserole dish

Ingredients

- 4 medium zucchini
- 4 cups marinara sauce
- 4 cups ricotta cheese
- 1/4 cup chopped Italian parsley
- 1 egg
- 1 1 /2 cups grated parmesan divided
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella
- 1 cup toasted bread crumbs

Instructions

1. Start by slicing your zucchini as thin as possible with a knife. Lay flat salt the zucchini slices and let sit for 30 minutes. Then pat dry to absorb the liquid.
2. roast the zucchini in a preheated 375-degree oven until lightly brown about 10 minutes.
3. Mix the ricotta with the parsley, egg, breadcrumbs and 1/2 cup of the grated parmesan.
4. In a 7 x11 casserole dish begin layering the zucchini

lasagna starting with the marinara sauce, zucchini and the mozzarella repeat the process ending with zucchini, marinara and cheese.

5. Bake in a preheated 375-degree oven for 45 to 55 minutes. Let the lasagna sit for 15 minutes before cutting. ENJOY!!!

Melanzane polpetta eggplant meatballs

Melanzane polpette eggplant meatballs

Melanzane polpette eggplant meatballs are a delicious meatless alternative to the traditional meatball recipe. Moist and flavorful with the fresh taste, light taste of ricotta cheese and the sharp taste of a good freshly grated parmesan.

No flavor is lost in this flavor and hearty Italian eggplant meatballs. It's a delicious alternative when your craving Italian flavors and want vegetarian too.

Your whole family will enjoy these tender melanzane polpette that pair perfectly with your favorite pasta. vegetable side or by themselves with crusty bread.

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Ingredients for melanzane polpette eggplant meatballs

Eggplant: Eggplant is the “meat” in this eggplant meatball and with good reason. It’s rich , meaty and spongy texture holds up well and complements the other ingredients.

Almost any variety of eggplant can be used in this recipe. I prefer to use the large globe eggplant because it has the most meaty pulp. When select an eggplant, look for a slightly firm, but not hard, texture and choose an eggplant that’s heavy for it’s size.

Breadcrumbs: breadcrumbs act as a binder for the eggplant mixture and also absorbs the juices from the meatballs as they cook.

Oil: I use a 50/50 blend of canola and extra virgin olive oil for frying. It has a high smoke point and the olive oil adds flavor.

Ingredients

- 1 medium eggplant
- 1 cup breadcrumbs
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan
- 2 eggs
- 2 Tbsp. chopped Italian parsley
- 1 minced garlic
- 1/3 cup chopped onions
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 cups oil for frying
- 4 cups marinara sauce

- 2 cups ricotta cheese
- 2 Tbsp. chopped basil

Instructions

1. cut the unpeeled eggplant into small dice. Drizzle with the olive oil, salt and roast in a 375-degree oven for 15 to 20 minutes. Mash the eggplant using a fork
2. Meanwhile in a bowl add the eggs and whisk to combine mix in the rest of the ingredients, mix well. add in the mashed eggplant and mix just until well mixed. Refrigerate the mixture for at least 30 minutes . Then form into golf size balls
3. Bake in a 375- degree oven for 20 minutes. Heat your favorite marinara add the eggplant meatballs o the sauce. add the basil add dollops of ricotta in between the meatballs. ENJOY!!!

Zucchini ricotta penne pasta

Zucchini ricotta penne pasta

I love making easy pasta recipes in the summer that highlight the fresh ingredients of the season. This zucchini ricotta penne pasta recipe uses one of the most abundant Summer vegetables, zucchini.

The best part about this recipe is that the sauce and pasta are ready at the same time.

It may be easy and quick to make , but penne pasta with zucchini and ricotta is as delicious as any fancy restaurant

dish.

This is Italian cooking at it's best easy unpretentious but really, really good.

Customize this zucchini ricotta penne pasta recipe

There is so many reasons to love this zucchini ricotta penne pasta recipe easy, quick . delicious and customizable to fit your life style and taste.

First you can customize this recipe by using any shape pasta you like. I recently made this recipe using ditalini small tubular shaped pasta.

And you can experiment with ingredients too, You can saute pancetta or Italian sausage along with the zucchini. Fish lovers might like another variation where shrimp are saute with the zucchini.

Ingredient

1/2 Lb. penne pasta

2 medium zucchini

2 Tbsp. olive oil

2 Tbsp. butter

2 Tbsp. minced garlic

1/2 cup chopped onion

2 cups ricotta cheese

Juice from one lemon

2 ladles pasta water

1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese

1/2 cup chopped Italian parsley

Instructions

1. Cook your pasta *al dente*. meanwhile make the sauce. Start by washing and slicing the zucchini into half moons.
2. Then in the olive oil and butter saute the onion and garlic until soft and just beginning to brown.
3. Add the sliced zucchini and saute until zucchini is beginning to brown. Add the pasta water and lemon juice simmer until sauce thickens, about 10 minutes.
4. Mix the grated parmesan with the ricotta and add to the zucchini simmer just to heat through. Toss the penne in this vegetarian sauce. Add the parsley grate more cheese over the top. ENJOY!!!

**Easy Sicilian Pasta alla
Norma**

Easy Sicilian Pasta alla

Norma

Pasta alla Norma also called pasta con le melanzane pasta with eggplant in English is a classic Sicilian pasta dish. It is an easy recipe that uses few ingredients and comes together in less than an hour.

It is made of pasta with tomato sauce fried eggplant and served with grated ricotta salata da grated cheese and basil.

This traditional Italian pasta is a satisfying vegetarian dinner, and it can be ready in under an hour.

Things to know about this Easy Sicilian pasta alla Norma recipe

The first thing is to choose dense, heavy eggplants and slowly frying them until caramelized results in a tender, meaty eggplant texture.

Second if aged ricotta salata is unavailable, a combination of different cheeses can replicate its salty, sharp taste. You could use Pecorino Romano or feta.

If you make this recipe, be sure to leave me a comment. Above all, I love to hear how the recipe turns out in your kitchen.

Ingredients

- 1/2 Lb. rigatoni
- 1 medium eggplant
- 4 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 1/2 cup chopped onions
- 2 cups crushed tomatoes
- 2 cups tomato sauce
- 1 cup pasta water

- 1/2 cup grated ricotta salada or parmesan
- a few basil leaves
- 3 cups olive oil canola blend for frying

Instructions

1. Start by washing and drying the eggplant cut into medium size
2. Bring the frying oil to medium high heat. fry the eggplant until golden brown. remove and drain on paper towels.
3. Meanwhile cook the pasta el dente and start on the sauce
4. In a saute pan add the 4 Tbsp. of olive oil. Then over medium high heat add the onion and garlic and saute until soft and just beginning to brown.
5. Add the tomatoes, pasta water and red wine. simmer until sauce thickens about 20 minutes. Add the fried eggplant and simmer 10 minutes longer. Toss the pasta in the eggplant sauce add the basil.
6. Plate grate the cheese over the top. ENJOY!!!!

**Italian Potatoes, tomatoes
and green beans**

**Italian Potatoes, tomatoes
and green beans**

Fresh green beans and potatoes simmered together in a light tomato sauce until deliciously tender. This recipe brings me back to my childhood. My mother would prepare this for dinner when the tomatoes and green beans were in season. She would instill my sisters and I in picking and trimming the green beans, and we would sit under the olive trees in the hills of Tuscany trimming green beans, telling stories and making priceless memories.

Fresh, vibrant and full of delicious flavor this Italian potatoes, tomatoes and green beans is full of good for you ingredients.

Made with a savory combination of onions, garlic, potatoes and green beans all simmered in a delicious Italian flavored tomato sauce makes for a delicious vegetarian dish that's easy to make.

Things to know about this Italian potatoes, tomatoes and green bean recipe

Freshly picked green beans have such a distinct texture and flavor over any frozen or canned product. If you don't have excess to fresh green beans the best alternative would be to use frozen green beans.

When Summer rolls around though , beans are one garden staple I almost always plant. If you don't have a green thumb the use fresh store-bought.

I use cherry tomatoes in this recipe but any tomato works. If you are going to use large tomatoes cut them into dice.

One more thing always use Italian parsley when you make this Italian potato tomato and green bean recipe. The curly parsley is flavorless and should not be used in Italian cooking. I

hope you make this. I think you will love it!!!!

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Ingredients

- 1 lb. trimmed green beans
- 3 russet potatoes
- 4 cups cherry tomatoes
- 4 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 medium chopped onion
- 2 cup marinara sauce
- 1 cup potato water
- 1/2 cup chopped Italian parsley

Instructions

1. Start by peeling the potatoes and cutting into large dice. Clean and trim the green beans
 2. In salted boiling water cook the the potatoes until almost cooked about 10 minutes. Add the green beans and cook 10 minutes longer or until the potatoes are fort tender and the green beans cooked but still crisp.
 3. meanwhile in a saute pan over medium high heat in the olive oil sate the garlic and onion until soft and just beginning to brown.
 4. Then add in the tomatoes, marinara and the cooking water from the potatoes. Simmer until sauce thickens. About 10 minutes. Add the drained cooked potatoes and green beans to the tomato sauce. Add in the Italian parsley.
ENJOY!!!
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Italian green beans and Tomatoes

Italian green beans and tomatoes

I grew up eating this classic Italian green bean and tomato side dish. Its a simple Italian dish that is bursting with summer flavors. Garlic, onions, cherry tomatoes and green beans are gently stewed together in this delicious Italian side dish that is perfect to serve with almost any summer meal.

This classic Italian green beans and tomato recipe has withstood the test of time, since now I make it for my family.

Fresh, frozen or canned green beans?

Honestly I always choose fresh over anything. And growing up in Italy the tomatoes and green beans came from the garden.

But if you have to choose between frozen or canned use frozen green beans. The canned ones don't work in this recipe, they are mushy and tasteless.

As far as the marinara sauce I always have my easy marinara sauce on hand. You can use your favorite store-bought marinara in this recipe.

About the tomatoes, I use cherry tomatoes. Any fresh tomato works in this Classic Italian green bean and tomato recipe. If you use large tomatoes cut them into dice before adding them to the onion and garlic.

Now about the parsley I only use Italian parsley. The curly parsley is flavorless. There is a noticeable difference in taste.

I hope you make this easy and delicious Italian classic, when you do please leave me a comment. I love hearing from you. It's my favorite part!!!

Ingredients

- 2 lbs. green beans
- 4 cups cherry tomatoes
- 2 cups marinara sauce
- 4 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 cup chopped onion

- 2 Tbsp. chopped Italian parsley

Instructions

1. Start by trimming and washing the string beans. Then par boil until fork tender.
2. In a saute pan over medium high heat in the olive oil saute the garlic and onion until soft and just beginning to brown.
3. Add the cherry tomatoes, marinara sauce and the water. Simmer until the tomatoes burst and the sauce thickens, about fifteen minutes.
4. Drain the string beans add to the tomato sauce. Adjust your seasonings.
5. Add in the parsley . ENJOY!!!