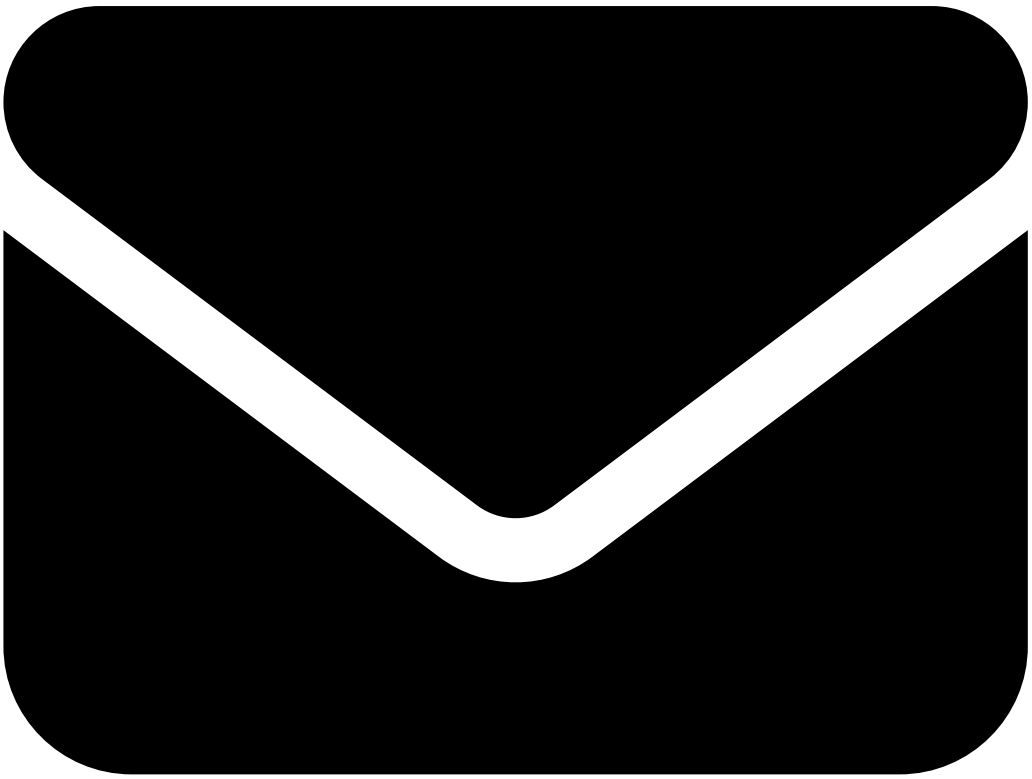
Quick Italian Bread Salad (Panzanella)

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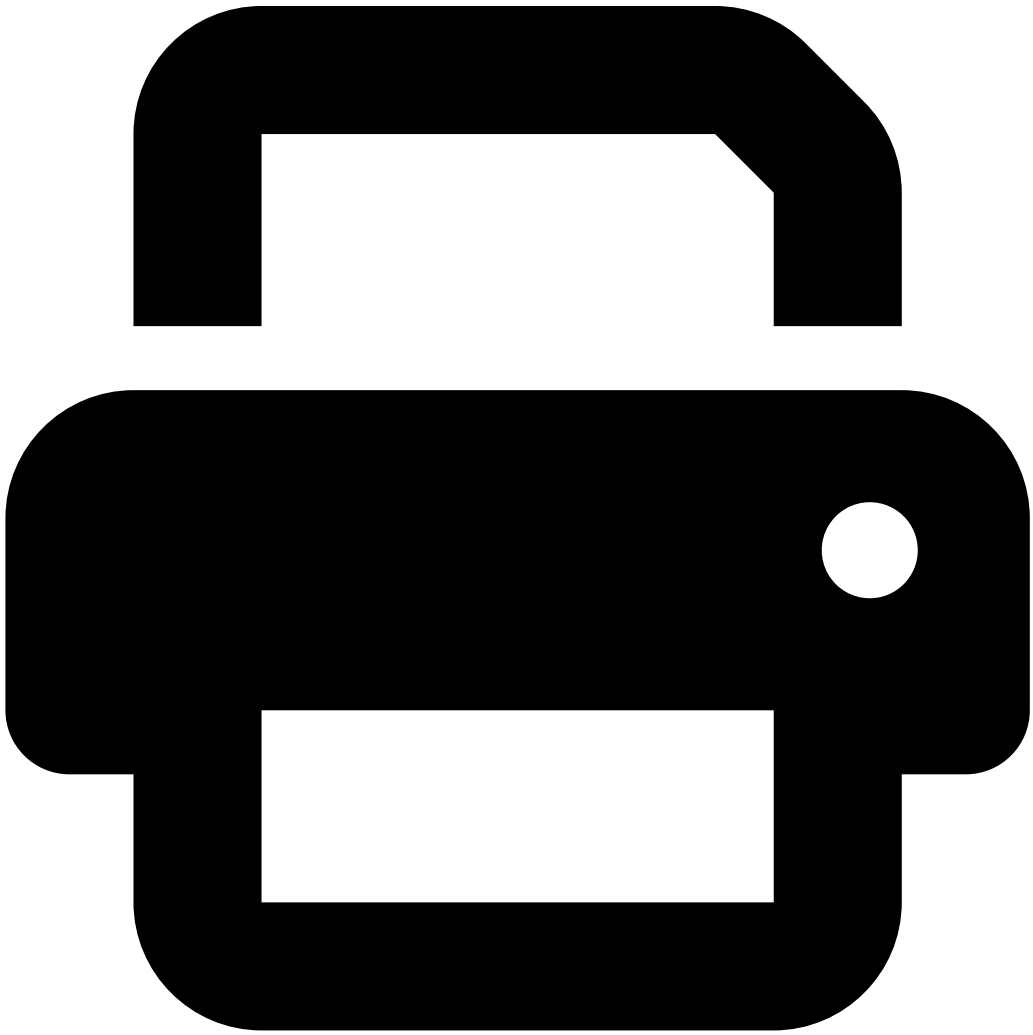
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This classic Tuscan quick Italian bread salad (panzanella) is a simple mix of ripe tomatoes, cucumbers, fresh mozzarella, crunchy croutons and a simple tangy vinaigrette- but don't let the simplicity fool you. This rustic summer salad is deliciousness in every bite, proving that simply ingredients like tomatoes and bread can be anything but ordinary. And it's one of my favorite things to make with tomatoes when they are in season.

Things to know about this Quick Italian Bread Salad (Panzanella) recipe

This easy Italian bread salad is the perfect way to use up day-old bread. Known as *Panzanella*, this rustic Tuscan salad

turns simple ingredients—like crusty bread, ripe tomatoes, fresh cucumbers, red onion, and basil—into a bright and refreshing summer meal. It’s a no-cook, quick recipe that’s ideal for warm days when you want something light but satisfying.

Panzanella comes together fast with pantry staples and garden-fresh vegetables. The bread is lightly toasted in the oven for texture, then tossed with juicy tomatoes and a zesty red wine vinaigrette that soaks into every bite. The result? A flavor-packed salad that’s hearty enough to serve on its own or alongside grilled meats, seafood, or a bowl of chilled soup.

This quick Italian salad is perfect for meal prep and outdoor dining. It holds up well at room temperature, making it a great choice for picnics, potlucks, or summer barbecues. You can customize it with extras like olives, roasted peppers, or mozzarella, making it endlessly adaptable. Whether you’re looking for a quick weeknight side or a simple vegetarian main, this Italian bread salad checks all the boxes.

Quick Italian Bread Salad (Panzanella)



- 3 cups day-old crusty Italian bread, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil (for toasting the

bread)
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon onion powder
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

For the salad

- 3 cups diced ripe tomatoes
- 1 cucumber, peeled and chopped
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- ½ cup fresh basil leaves, torn
- Optional: ½ cup fresh mozzarella balls or shaved Parmesan

For the dressing

- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. Place the bread cubes in a large bowl. Toss with 2 tablespoons olive oil, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, onion powder, salt, and pepper until evenly coated.
3. Spread the bread onto a baking sheet and bake for 5–7 minutes, or until lightly golden and crisp. Let cool slightly.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together the ¼ cup olive oil, red wine vinegar, minced garlic, salt, and pepper.
5. In a large serving bowl, combine the tomatoes, cucumber, red onion, basil, and mozzarella (if using).
6. Add the toasted bread cubes and pour the dressing over

the salad. Toss gently until everything is evenly coated.

7. Let the salad sit for 10–15 minutes so the bread absorbs the dressing while still retaining a little texture. Taste and adjust the seasoning with additional salt and pepper if needed. Garnish with extra basil or shaved Parmesan before serving.