

Toasted Caprese

Traditional Italian salad served on lightly toasted crispy bread. It makes an easy and fast breakfast. The fresh ingredients are the cornerstone of this recipe.

Serves 14 | Prep. time 15 minutes | Cooking time 5 minutes

Ingredients

- 14 slices sourdough bread
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled
- 1 pound fresh mozzarella cheese, sliced ¼-inch thick
- ⅓ cup fresh basil leaves
- 3 large tomatoes, sliced ¼-inch thick
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. Toast the bread slices, rubbing each with garlic.
2. Layer a slice of mozzarella cheese, 1–2 basil leaves, and a tomato slice on each piece of toast.
3. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Serve.

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories 203, fat 10.7 g, carbs 16.5 g, protein 10.5 g, sodium 368 mg

Baked Falafel

This is an extremely easy, delicious way to make traditional falafel. Serve with pita bread and tzatziki to make a true Mediterranean dinner full of flavor and energy.

Serves 2 | Prep. time 20 minutes | Cooking time 20 minutes

Ingredients

- ¼ cup chopped onion
- 1 (15-ounce) can garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ teaspoon ground coriander
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 teaspoons olive oil

Directions

1. Squeeze the onion in cheesecloth to remove as much moisture as possible. Set aside.
2. Blend the garbanzos, parsley, garlic, salt, coriander, cumin and baking soda in a blender.
3. Transfer the blended mixture to a bowl and mix in the onion. Add the egg and flour.
4. Make 4 patties and set aside for 15 minutes.
5. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
6. Heat the olive oil in a skillet and fry the patties for 3 minutes on each side.
7. Put the skillet in the oven and bake for 10 minutes. Serve with hummus, if desired.

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories 281, fat 9.3 g, carbs 39.3 g, protein 11.4 g, sodium 909 mg

Spicy Shrimp Pasta

This dish is quick and easy to make and a perfect weeknight meal. You can adjust the spiciness to your preferences by adding or removing some of the red pepper flakes. Blanching the heirloom tomatoes in boiling water for 2 minutes first will make it easier to peel them.

Serves 4-6 | Prep. time 15 minutes | Cooking time 15 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 pound whole-wheat thin pasta, such as angel hair
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ½ cup onion, diced
- 3 cups heirloom tomatoes, blanched, peeled, and chopped
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon dry oregano
- ½ to 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 pound shrimp, cleaned, peeled, and deveined (tail removed or kept on according to preference)
- 6 cups fresh baby spinach, torn
- ¼ cup fresh basil, sliced thinly
- Freshly grated parmesan for serving

Directions

1. Cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain and set aside.
2. While the pasta is cooking, pour and warm the olive oil in a large deep skillet over medium heat.
3. Place the onion in the skillet and sauté for 2-3 minutes.
4. Add the tomatoes, salt, black pepper, chili pepper flakes, and oregano. Cook for an additional 2 minutes.
5. Add the shrimp to the skillet, and cook for 4-5 minutes, stirring frequently until the shrimp turn pink and are mostly cooked through.
6. Place the spinach in the skillet and cook until wilted, approximately 2 minutes.
7. Add the cooked pasta to the skillet and toss to mix. Reduce the heat to low and cook until the pasta is heated through, approximately 2-4 minutes.
8. Remove from the heat, transfer to a large serving plate, sprinkle the fresh basil on top, and serve immediately with freshly grated parmesan on the side, if desired.

Nutritional Information:

Calories 358, fat 4 g, carbs 49 g, protein 32 g, sodium 620 mg

Fried Mushrooms with Herbs and Garlic

Light and simple to prepare, these Mediterranean-inspired mushrooms with thyme and garlic make a wonderful and super-quick side dish for any season.

Serves 4 | Cooking time 4 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 pound white baby mushrooms
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 bunch fresh thyme
- ½ teaspoon fennel seeds (optional)
- Salt and pepper

Directions

1. Wash the mushrooms under cold water and detach the stems. Pat dry with paper towels.
2. Add the olive oil to a skillet and warm over medium heat. Add the mushrooms, garlic, thyme, and fennel seeds, if using. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
3. Sauté for 4-6 minutes, or until the mushrooms start to get colored and serve.

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories 110, fat 7 g, carbs 8 g, protein 4 g, sodium 220 mg

Dark Orange Olive Oil Cake

Enjoy this wonderfully tender, crumbly olive oil orange cake. It has a real depth of flavor, and this cornmeal-flecked version has a particularly palatable texture too.

Serves 8 | Prep. time 60 minutes | Cooking time 20 minutes

Ingredients

- Cooking spray or olive oil
- 1 medium blood orange
- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup medium-grind cornmeal
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ⅔ cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar (divided)
- ½ cup whole-milk plain yogurt
- 3 large eggs
- ½ cup olive oil
- 4 paper-thin half-moon-shaped blood orange slices (optional)

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a loaf pan.
2. Remove the zest from the orange and cut the zest into strips.
3. Juice the orange. Set aside.
4. Mix the flour, baking powder, and soda, cornmeal, and salt in a bowl. Add ⅔ cup of the sugar and ¼ cup of the blood orange juice. Add the yogurt, then the eggs and olive oil.
5. Mix the flour mixture into the wet ingredients and fold in the zest strips.
6. Pour the batter into a prepared pan and top with blood orange slices and sugar.
7. Bake for 60 minutes. Cool for 20 minutes before serving.

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories 360, fat 17 g, carbs 46 g, protein 6 g, sodium 239 mg

*****All of these recipes can be found in *Effortless Mediterranean Diet for Beginners Quick Start: Mediterranean Quick Start Guide 14-Day Meal Plan and Recipes* by Madison Miller. Click [here](#) or on the cover to get a copy of the book.**

