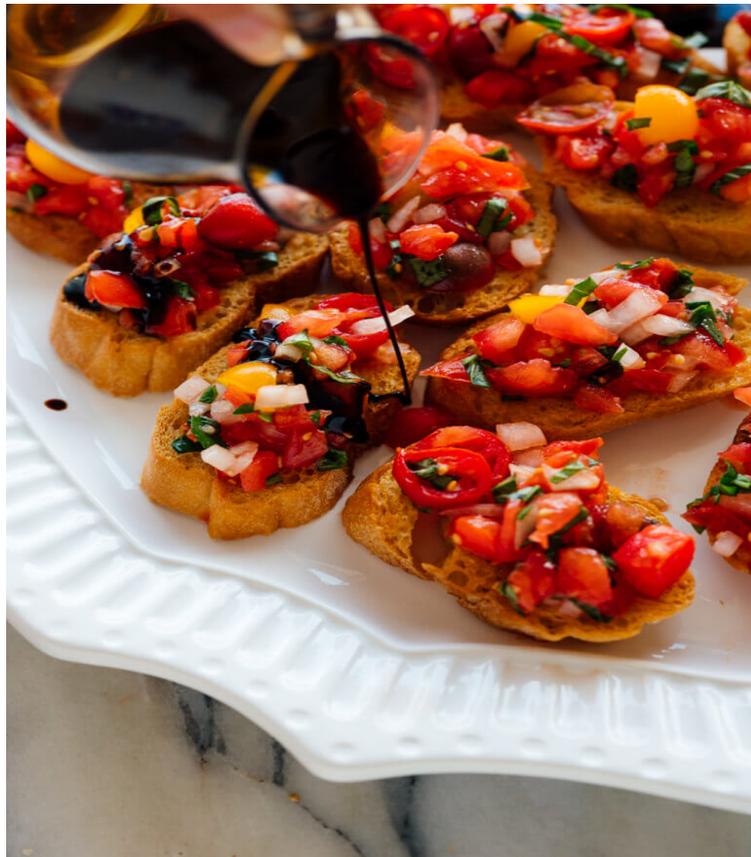




NEOLIO

THE RECIPES

Tomato Basil Bruschetta with Balsamic Drizzle



At its best, bruschetta is light and crisp, covered in deep red tomatoes and full of fresh flavor. At its worst, bruschetta is soggy, pink and flavorless and the unique touch of the Balsamic Vinegar of Modena.

Ingredients

1. **Ripe Tomatoes:** Any variety will do. Use the best tomatoes you can find. I included a few yellow cherry tomatoes to make my bruschetta extra colorful.
2. **White Onion:** You won't find onion in every bruschetta recipe, but it adds a light crunch and additional flavor. With onion, you don't have to overload your bruschetta topping with garlic to make it taste amazing.
3. **Fresh Basil:** Only fresh will do. You'll want to use a big handful, whether it's from your garden or the store.
4. **Garlic:** Not so much that your guests are embarrassed by their garlic breath! Use fresh garlic, pressed in a garlic press or minced by hand. Jarred garlic is just not the same.
5. **Crusty Baguette:** Look for a slender loaf of crusty bread. We'll bake it until it's so crisp, it shatters when you bite into it. Delicious.
6. **Extra-Virgin Olive Oil:** We'll brush the bread lightly with oil before toasting it, and we'll stir some into the tomato mixture for richness.
7. **Balsamic vinegar.**

Preparation

Use ripe tomatoes.

I know I just said this, but it bears repeating. Tomato bruschetta will always be best served during the summertime, but you can probably get by with cherry tomatoes in other seasons. I find cherry tomatoes to be the most consistent of all tomatoes.

Drain off excess tomato juice.

Most tomatoes (cherry tomatoes excluded) are *quite* juicy. When you toss diced tomato with salt, the juice exits the tomatoes, and you can end up with a watery bowl of tomatoes.

We don't want soggy bruschetta, so pour off the excess juice before seasoning it at the end. This doesn't take any extra time, and produces a more flavorful and consistent end result.

Brush both sides of bread with oil.

Oiling the bread ensures that both sides are golden brown and crispy (think of the difference between plain toast and homemade croutons). The oil also helps repel tomato juice so your toasts stay crisp.

Toast at 450 degrees Fahrenheit.

High heat yields extra crispy toasts, which is what we're going for. I'll never suggest *broiling* bread because broilers vary considerably from oven to oven, and no one wants to light their toast on fire. Right?

Serve promptly.