

## Bruschetta with Tomato and Basil

Serves 8-12 as appetizer (approx. 30 slices)

9 ripe plum tomatoes  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
1.5 tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
1.5 tbsp balsamic vinegar  
9-10 fresh basil leaves, chopped  
Salt and ground black pepper to taste  
1 baguette French bread or ciabatta bread  
¼ cup olive oil

Preheat oven to 450.

1. Prepare the tomatoes. Parboil tomatoes for 1 minute in boiling water removed from heat. Drain. Using small sharp knife remove the skin. Cut into halves or quarters and remove juice, seeds, and stem area. An alternative is to reduce tomatoes to 6 and add a can of drained, diced tomatoes.

2. Finely chop tomatoes. I would use a knife as food processor takes them to mush pretty fast! Put chopped tomatoes, garlic, 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, and vinegar in a bowl and mix. Add chopped basil leaves. Add salt and pepper to taste.

3. Slice bread on diagonal in ½" slices. Coat one side with olive oil using a pastry brush. Place on cooking sheet, oil side down. Toast on top rack in oven for 5-6 minutes (or broiler for 2 minutes) until bread becomes a golden brown.

The traditional method of preparing toast is to grill bread on a griddle for 1 minute on each side. With a sharp knife score each slice 3 times and rub a clove of garlic in the slices and drizzle with small amount of olive oil.

4. Align the bread on a serving plate oil side up. Place tomato topping on bread and serve or alternatively, serve the bread alone with topping on the side in a bowl.