



Insalata Caprese with Herbed Crostini

2 pounds fresh tomatoes
1 pound fresh mozzarella
Handful of fresh basil
½ cup olive oil
2 cloves of garlic
2 teaspoons of fresh thyme
teaspoon of black pepper,
freshly ground
Olive Oil
Balsamic Vinegar
Black Pepper
Sea Salt
Loaf of rustic bread

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Place ½ cup of olive oil and garlic into a ramekin. Cover ramekin and bake for 15 to 20 minutes.

Wash, drain, and mince the thyme.

Remove the oil from the oven. Increase the oven temperature to 400 degrees. Carefully press the garlic into the oil. Add the thyme and black pepper.

Cut the bread into half inch slices. Brush with bread with the olive oil. Place the bread slices onto a baking sheet and toast in the oven for 10 to 12 minutes.

Wash, dry and slice the tomatoes.

Slice the fresh mozzarella into ¼ inch slices.

Wash and drain the basil and cut into chiffonade slices.

To plate the salad, alternate slices of tomato and cheese. Top with basil. Drizzle with olive oil and balsamic vinegar.

Sprinkle fresh pepper and salt over the salad.

Serve immediately with crostini.

Serves 4 as a main course or 6 to 8 as a side salad

Deviations:

Add sliced of prosciutto between the cheese and tomatoes.

Use a combination of traditional salad tomatoes, yellow pear, and cherry tomatoes for an informal and more colorful salad.

Replace the balsamic with a reduced balsamic.