

Panzanella Salad

Authentic Italian Panzanella salad with ripe tomatoes, crusty bread, and fresh herbs. This Tuscan bread salad is perfect for summer entertaining.

35	10	45	4	Easy
PREP MIN	COOK MIN	TOTAL MIN	SERVINGS	DIFFICULTY

Panzanella Salad

Ingredients

- 3 bread
- 2 oz tomato
- 6 tbsp olive oil
- 1 red onion
- 2 clove garlic
- 4 cucumber
- 1 cup basil
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- 4 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper

Instructions

- 1 Prepare the bread**

Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Cut 3 pieces of day-old bread into 1-inch cubes and toss with 2 oz olive oil on a baking sheet. Toast for 8-10 minutes until golden brown and crispy on the outside but still slightly soft inside.
- 2 Prepare the tomatoes**

Cut 4 large tomatoes into bite-sized chunks and place in a large mixing bowl. Sprinkle with 1 tsp salt and let sit for 15 minutes to release their juices.
- 3** Slice 1 red onion paper-thin and soak in cold water for 10 minutes to mellow the flavor. Drain thoroughly and pat completely dry with paper towels.
- 4** Slice 2 cucumbers into half-moon shapes about ¼-inch thick. Cut 1 cup fresh mozzarella and 1 cup ricotta into bite-sized chunks.
- 5** Mince 2 cloves garlic very finely. Tear 1 cup fresh basil leaves into smaller pieces by hand.
- 6 Make the dressing**

Whisk together 4 tbsp red wine vinegar, minced garlic, 1 tsp salt, and 1 tsp black pepper in a small bowl until the salt completely dissolves.

- 7 **Assemble the salad**
Add toasted bread cubes, drained onions, cucumbers, mozzarella, ricotta, and torn basil to the bowl with the salted tomatoes and their accumulated juices.
- 8 Pour the vinegar dressing and remaining 6 tbsp olive oil over the salad. Toss gently with your hands or large spoons until everything is evenly coated and the bread begins to absorb the juices.
- 9 Let the salad stand at room temperature for 30 minutes to allow the bread to soften and the flavors to meld before serving.

Tips

- Salt your tomatoes 15 minutes before assembling to draw out their natural juices, which become part of the dressing.
- Soak thinly sliced red onions in cold water for 10 minutes to reduce their bite and make them more mellow.
- Toast your bread cubes until golden brown but not completely crispy – they should still have some give to absorb the dressing.
- Let the assembled salad rest at room temperature for 30 minutes before serving to allow the bread to absorb the flavors.
- Use the ripest tomatoes you can find – their juice is what makes the bread tender and flavorful.
- Drizzle extra olive oil and vinegar just before serving to refresh the flavors and add brightness.
- Tear the bread by hand rather than cutting it for more rustic, irregular pieces that hold dressing better.
- Add delicate herbs like basil at the very end to prevent them from wilting and turning dark.