

Bean and Onion Bruschetta

Bruschetta con Fagioli e Cipolle

Rubbing the sliced end of a garlic clove over the toasted and warm cut side of the bread adds a spicy heat to this appetizer. A one-slice serving makes a filling antipasto.

For the topping:

- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small onion, sliced into half-rounds
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons low-sodium canned chicken broth (water may be substituted)
- 1 (15.5-ounce) can borlotti beans, drained and rinsed —also known as cranberry beans or Roman beans (pinto beans or cannellini beans may be substituted)

Heat the olive oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. When the oil is hot, add the onions and sauté until they are soft and translucent, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the tomato paste, stirring until it is well blended with the onions, 1 to 2 minutes. Add the salt and pepper, stirring until combined. Add ½ cup of chicken broth and the drained and rinsed beans, stirring to combine.

Cook the beans over medium heat until they start to boil, 2 to 3 minutes. Once boiling, cover the pan, reduce heat to low and simmer until the beans are tender but still retain their shape, 18 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. If the beans start to become too dry, add the additional 2 tablespoons of broth and stir until well combined. Remove pan from heat and set aside, covered, while the bread is prepared.

For the bruschetta:

- 4 slices Italian bread (¾-inch-thick slices of a Tuscan boule or similar bread)
- 1 large clove garlic, skin removed and cut in half
- 1 to 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Cut the slices of bread in half and toast the 8 half-slices on the stovetop using a grill pan over medium heat, turning the slices to toast both sides to a golden brown. Or, toast on a baking sheet on the top rack of a 450-degree oven, turning the slices to brown both sides.

Remove the toasted slices to a serving platter. While the bread is still hot, rub the cut side of the garlic halves over the top surface of the toasted bread.

Drizzle the top of each slice with olive oil and, using a tablespoon, evenly distribute the bean mixture on top of the toasted slices. Serve warm.

Makes 8 bruschetta.