

Bruschette Classice (Tomato and Basil Bruschetta)

This is the classic Italian bruschetta (pronounced "bren-SKET-tab). Here, garlic-rubbed grilled bread is topped with tomatoes, basil and olive oil. Molto semplice e buonissime!



8 (2¾ to 3 pounds) medium tomatoes, cored, de-seeded and chopped into ½-inch cubes.

18 large fresh basil leaves

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus more to drizzle

1 teaspoon Kosher or sea salt

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

12 ¾-inch-thick slices of artisan bread (Tucan boule, ciabatta, or similar)

1 large clove garlic, peeled, with the stem end cut off

Heat a grill pan over medium heat.

Meanwhile, place the de-seeded (*) and cubed tomatoes into a large bowl. Using your hands, tear the basil leaves into 4 or 5 pieces, each, and add to the tomatoes. Add the olive oil, salt and black pepper, and stir until well combined. Set aside.

When the grill pan is hot, put the bread slices on the pan and grill until toasted with dark brown grill marks. Turn the slices over and grill the second side. Once grilled, remove from the pan and place the slices on a platter. While the bread is still hot, rub the sliced end of the garlic across the surface of one side of the grilled bread. The heat from the bread will “melt” the garlic into the bread’s surface.

Stir the tomato mixture one more time and then, using a slotted spoon, top each grilled slice with the tomato/basil mixture, distributing evenly between all slices.

Drizzle the *bruschette* with additional olive oil, an extra pinch or two of salt, a couple of grinds of black pepper, and serve immediately.

Makes 12 full slices or 24 half slices.