

Panzanella Bread Salad

Ingredients:

- 4 slices of day-old sourdough bread, cubed
- 1/2 cup of olive oil
- Handful of arugula
- Handful of fresh basil
- 12 cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 red bell pepper, charred, peeled and diced
- 1/2 red onion, thinly sliced
- 8 capers
- 1 clove garlic, smashed
- 3 or 4 large tomatoes, halved
- 1/2 pound of asparagus, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 15 medium-size shrimp, deveined but tails intact
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 ball of fresh mozzarella di bufala cheese

Directions:

Preheat oven at 350 degrees

Place the sourdough bread on a parchment paper-lined baking tray. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Bake in the oven for 10 minutes or until the bread is golden brown.

Meanwhile, in a bowl, mix together the arugula, fresh basil, cherry tomatoes, roasted pepper, red onion, and capers. Keep aside in the refrigerator.

Chop a garlic clove in half, and rub it on the bottom and sides of a large bowl. While the croutons are still hot, add them into the bowl to infuse the garlic flavor. Squeeze the tomato halves over the croutons to allow their juices to mix in. Once the tomatoes have been juiced, cut up the remainder of the tomatoes and toss in with the crouton mixture.

Drizzle with olive oil and let it rest at room temperature for 2 hours for the bread to soak all the juices from the tomatoes and olive oil.

In a pan on medium-high heat, saute the asparagus in butter for 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Remove from the pan and toss it with the croutons. Add the shrimp to the same pan and saute in olive oil for 1 minute, on each side. Add the garlic. Season with salt and pepper. Combine the croutons and asparagus with the arugula salad.

For serving: Cut the fresh mozzarella cheese into pieces on the serving plate, season with salt and pepper. Pile the panzanella salad and the garlic shrimp on top.

Recipe by Chuck Hughes