

Bruschetta of Wild Mushrooms

From Fall Menu for A Splendid Table, September 2002

Adapted from A New Way to Cook (Sally Schneider Artisan, 2001 - Copyright 2001)

To make bruschetta, prepare Rustic Garlic Toasts & top each toast with up to 1/4 C of Roasted Wild Mushrooms.

Rustic Garlic Toasts

There are several methods (depending on how many people you're serving & whether or not you want to heat the oven). Brush olive oil onto bread rather than drizzling it, a method that leaves flavor without excess. You could also use a flavored oil, such as rosemary oil, or melted butter.

- 4 oz crusty peasant bread or baguette, sliced 1/4" thick
- 1 TBS extra-virgin olive oil or unsalted butter, melted
- 2 garlic cloves, halved
- 1/2 tsp kosher salt

Oven Method: Preheat oven to 425°F. Arrange bread slices on baking sheet and, using slightly dampened brush, brush both sides with olive oil. Toast bread in oven 2-3 minutes on each side, till browned. Rub each slice lightly with garlic & sprinkle salt on top.

Stove-top Method: Heat large cast-iron skillet over medium heat 5 minutes, or till very hot. Using slightly dampened brush, brush both sides with olive oil. Arrange bread in pan & toast till bottom side is golden (about 2 minutes). (Press slices down if necessary with metal spatula to brown bottoms evenly) Turn bread over & toast other side. Brush both sides of each toast lightly with garlic & sprinkle with salt.

Pan-grilled bread: This simple variation of the stove-top method re-creates the flavor, texture & satisfaction of bread grilled over a wood fire. When pan is hot, sprinkle scant 1 TBS smoking chips or place a 1" piece of grapevine in bottom. Place a round, footed rack in skillet. When chips or grapevine begins to smoke, arrange oil-brushed bread on rack, cover & toast 3-4 minutes on each side, till golden. Brush toasts with garlic & sprinkle with salt.

Roasted Wild Mushrooms

Mushrooms pose a real dilemma in healthy cooking: they're so porous, they soak up fat like a sponge when sautéed in the traditional manner. This technique, roasting mushrooms with a little bit of oil & wine till tender with a slightly browned exterior, duplicates the delicious effects of sautéing without much fat & effort. These can be used in all recipes that call for sautéed mushrooms. To serve as is, toss with minced garlic & parsley à la Provençal.

- 1 1/2 lbs wild mushrooms, (chanterelle, morel, shiitake, oyster, hedgehog, and/or portobello)
- 1 medium onion
- 2 garlic cloves, smashed
- 2 juniper berries, crushed
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme or 1/4 tsp dried thyme
- 2 TBS dry white wine or sherry
- 1 TBS extra-virgin olive oil

- 1 tsp grappa or cognac (optional)
- 1/2 tsp kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 375° F. Brush any dirt from mushrooms with soft brush or damp paper towel. Trim off ends of stems - discard. Cut mushrooms lengthwise into halves, quarters, or eighths to make bite-sized pieces that will still retain some of the shape of the mushroom. In shallow casserole, combine mushrooms, onion, garlic, juniper berries & thyme. In small bowl, combine wine with 2 tsp of oil + the grappa, if using & pour over mushrooms as you toss to coat them. Sprinkle with salt & toss again.

Cover mushrooms with foil & roast 35-40 minutes, till they're tender & juices are just beginning to caramelize in pan bottom. (If there is still some liquid in pan, uncover & roast mushrooms till it has evaporated. Continue to roast till they begin to brown, about 10 minutes longer) When mushrooms are tender, toss with remaining tsp of oil & the pepper to taste. (You can roast the mushrooms several hours ahead & reheat them before serving in a small nonstick skillet with a little water)

Serves 4

Fall Menu for A Splendid Table

Herb-Scented Tuscan Pork Roast

Rustic Rosemary Apple Tart

Bruschetta of Wild Mushrooms

Roasted Winter Squash Puree

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