

# Mangia Bene E Vivi Bene!

By FRANK ZEOLI



The best part of summer ending is the abundance of homegrown tomatoes. Many Italians, including my grandmother, would use the season's bounty and jar them to be used all year long in their "Sunday sauce."

Another great use for them is to make Bruschetta. This classic appetizer is a perfect way to capture the flavors of garden-ripened tomatoes, fresh basil, onions, garlic, and olive oil. It's ideal for any party. I usually make a large batch when the homegrown tomatoes are plentiful, that way I can serve it all year.

**Prep Time: 15 minutes**

## INGREDIENTS

- 4 to 5 plum tomatoes (approx. 1.5 lbs.)
- 1 medium sized onion (white or yellow)
- 6 cloves of fresh garlic
- 5-7 large basil leaves
- ½ cup of fresh chopped Italian parsley
- ¼ cup of extra virgin olive oil
- ½ cup of parmesan cheese
- Salt (to taste)
- Pepper (to taste)

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Clean the tomatoes well and cut them into quarters. I leave the skin on, but you can remove the skin if you like. Cut the onion into strips. I always use white onions, but you can use yellow or red.
2. Chop the parsley and cut the garlic in half.
3. Add the tomatoes, onions, garlic, basil, parsley, and half of the olive oil in a food processor. Blend for a few seconds on high until the mixture is chopped but not pureed (be careful not to liquify the mix).
4. In a mesh strainer, add the mixture and move the mixture around using a rubber spatula so all the water drains out. Do this until almost all the water is gone.
5. Transfer the mixture to a mixing bowl and add the rest of the olive oil and the parmesan cheese. Salt and pepper to taste. You can adjust the flavor if there isn't enough garlic by adding granulated garlic or if the tomatoes are not as sweet as you would like by adding white sugar. If the tomatoes are ripe, you won't need any sugar.

# Tomato Bruschetta



6. Put the mixture in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours, but overnight is better if you can. This will give the bruschetta a chance to meld the flavors of all the ingredients together.

Toast a slice of Italian bread and place some of the bruschetta on top. For added flavor, you can also drizzle a little balsamic vinegar on top. This recipe can be doubled or tripled if you want to make a larger batch like I do. I hope you enjoy it!

Look for more recipes in the next edition of the **SIAMO QUI**

