



BRUSCHETTA

Brandi Carson

Fresh is always best, especially with ripe red tomatoes and large, fragrant basil leaves. Enjoy this summertime favorite all year round!

Ingredients

4 or 5 medium vine-ripened tomatoes,
finely diced
large bunch of fresh basil, destemmed and
finely shredded
1 large or 2 medium garlic cloves, minced

olive oil
1 bottle (approximately 8.5 oz) balsamic vinegar (the
cheap kind is fine because it is being reduced)
salt and pepper
baguette
butter, melted

Directions

1. Make balsamic reduction first. Be warned that reducing balsamic creates a strong scent. You will want to make sure to ventilate your kitchen. Pour the entire bottle of balsamic vinegar into a small saucepan. Cook over medium heat, bringing it to a boil. Let simmer for 15 to 20 minutes, checking on it periodically. It doesn't really need to be stirred, but swirl the pan occasionally to check how thick it is getting. The amount of liquid will reduce to less than half of the original amount. You are looking for a thickened liquid that will coat the back of a spoon, stay on the spoon, and be the consistency of syrup once cooled. You need to make sure it doesn't get too thick while hot, or it will be like caramel when it's cooled down.
2. In a medium bowl, combine diced tomatoes, basil, and garlic. Drizzle a couple tablespoons of olive oil over the top. Salt and pepper to taste and then drizzle about a tablespoon of the reduced balsamic over the top. Mix well and set aside. It is best if it can marinate together for a few hours before serving.
3. Preheat your oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.
4. Slice baguettes at an angle $\frac{1}{3}$ " thick. Arrange them on a sheet pan in a single layer. With a basting brush, coat both sides of baguette slices with melted butter. Salt and pepper as well.
5. Bake about 5 to 6 minutes until the bottoms are slightly brown, flip all the slices over, and bake an additional 4 to 5 minutes until the other side is slightly browned.
6. Serve baguette with a spoonful of the bruschetta on top with a drizzle of the balsamic reduction over the top.