

End-of-Summer Tomato Tartine

Kathy's Note: This French-style open-faced sandwich features ripe seasonal tomatoes, fresh basil and fresh ricotta or goat cheese with a sprinkling of salt, pepper and olive oil. You could always add thin slices of peeled cucumber or avocado as well.

Serves 1.

Ingredients:

1 slice bread, dark and whole grain work best but you could use a baguette or virtually any type of bread
1 1/2 to 2 tablespoons fresh whole milk ricotta or soft goat cheese
1 ripe tomato, thinly sliced
2 leaves basil, thinly sliced
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Drizzle olive oil

Instructions:

Toast the bread lightly if you like. Spread the bread with the ricotta or goat cheese. Layer on the tomato. Sprinkle with the basil, salt, pepper and a drizzle of olive oil.

Grilled Italian Vegetable Sandwich

Kathy's Note: This dish transcends the word "sandwich." Thin strips of eggplant and zucchini and wedges of radicchio are grilled until charred and tender, layered on long slices of crusty bread, topped with fresh mozzarella, and then doused with fruity olive oil and sweet balsamic vinegar.

You can also add slices of paper-thin prosciutto or salami or smoked turkey.

You can serve the sandwiches as is, or grill them outside on a charcoal or gas fire until the cheese just begins to melt.

Makes 4 hearty sandwiches.

Ingredients:

For the sandwiches:

1 medium-large eggplant (about 1 pound), ends trimmed, cut lengthwise into very thin slices
1/8 teaspoon salt
1 medium zucchini, ends trimmed, cut lengthwise into very thin strips
1 head radicchio (about 6 ounces), trimmed and leaves separated (remove any outer leaves that are bruised or wilted)
4 tablespoons fruity olive oil
Pinch of salt, or to taste
Generous grinding of black pepper
1 large crusty loaf ciabatta, or a thick baguette or sourdough loaf (about 1 to 1 3/4 pounds)
1/2 pound fresh mozzarella (about 2 balls), thinly sliced

For the vinaigrette:

All recipes by Here & Now resident chef Kathy Gunst, except where noted

2 to 3 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
Pinch of salt, or to taste
A few grindings of black pepper
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

Instructions:

Place the eggplant slices in a large colander and sprinkle with the salt. Let sit for 20 minutes. (The salt will leech out any bitter juices from the eggplant.)

Meanwhile, light a charcoal or gas grill and heat to 300 to 350 degrees.

Rinse the eggplant under cold running water to remove the salt and pat dry with paper towels or a tea towel.

Place the eggplant, zucchini and radicchio in a bowl and gently toss with the 4 tablespoons of the olive oil, and the salt, and pepper.

When the fire is hot, grill the eggplant strips for 3 minutes on each side, for a total of 5 to 6 minutes, or until they are charred and tender. Grill the zucchini for 2 minutes on each side, or until charred and tender. Grill the radicchio for 1 minute on each side, or until wilted and almost soft. Place the grilled vegetables on a plate and set aside. (You can grill the vegetables several hours before serving. Cover and refrigerate. Bring to room temperature before assembling the sandwiches.)

To make the vinaigrette, mix in a small bowl 2 tablespoons of the oil, the vinegar, salt, pepper, and lemon juice.

To assemble the sandwiches, cut the bread into 4 equal pieces. Cut each piece of bread in half lengthwise to yield 8 slices. Using a pastry brush or a spoon, lightly brush the vinaigrette onto all 8 slices of bread. Divide the grilled vegetables among 4 slices of the bread. Top with equal portions of the cheese and sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper. Top each piece of bread with another piece of bread to create the sandwich.

The sandwiches can be eaten as is. Or, if you want to grill them (a step that is strongly suggested), light a charcoal or gas grill and heat to around 300 to 350 degrees. Brush the outside of the sandwiches with the remaining tablespoon of oil and grill for about 1 1/2 minutes on each side, or until the bread is very lightly charred and the cheese is beginning to melt. Alternately, you can heat a large heavy skillet, add some of the remaining oil, and cook the sandwiches for about 1 1/2 minutes on each side. You will need 2 skillets to cook all the sandwiches at the same time.

Shannon Hill's Italian Sandwich

Kathy's Note: Maine Meat (memeat.com) is a sustainable butcher shop in Kittery, Maine. All the meat they sell is raised within 100 miles of Kittery. It's a pretty extraordinary place and I am lucky to call the owners, Jarrod Spangler and Shannon Hill, my friends. Shannon makes amazing sandwiches Tuesday through Friday using house-cured meats like salami, prosciutto, smoked turkey, local cheeses and locally grown produce. This is her version of a classic Italian sandwich.

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Ingredients/Instructions:

Start with crusty French bread. Cut a 6-inch piece of bread in half lengthwise. Drizzle both sides with olive oil. Place paper thin slices red onion on top. Place several slides of Provolone cheese on top of the onions and then add several slices of prosciutto or cotto, ham, and salami. Drizzle lightly with olive oil. On the other piece of bread add tender lettuce leaves, thin slices of ripe tomato and relish (she uses a local Zucchini Relish). Place the meat and cheese slice on top and cut in half. Get ready for a great sandwich.

Chicken Salad Sandwich with Watercress Mayonnaise

Kathy's Note: The bright, tangy flavor of watercress mayonnaise gives this chicken salad a delicious lift. Pile it on toasted bread with whole sprigs of watercress, or serve it on a bed of baby greens.

Makes 4 sandwiches.

Ingredients:

2 1/2 cups chopped cooked chicken (about 1 pound)
3 tablespoons finely chopped red onion
1 cup loosely packed stemmed watercress
1/3 cup mayonnaise
Salt and freshly ground pepper
8 slices of your favorite type of bread
Watercress or lettuce for the sandwiches

Instructions:

Place the chicken and the onion in a large bowl.

Puree the watercress in a food processor or blender until finely chopped, scraping down the sides to incorporate any stray greens. Add the mayonnaise, and puree again until well blended and very green. Season the watercress mayonnaise with salt and pepper, and add it to the chicken mixture. Stir to coat all of the pieces with the mayonnaise.

Lightly toast the bread and divide the salad between 4 slices. Add the watercress to the remaining 4 slices and invert the bread with the watercress on top of the bread with the chicken salad. Cut in half and serve.

Variations:

Substitute arugula or radicchio for the watercress.

Add 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest and 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice to the mayonnaise.

Zingerman's Reuben

Zingerman's Deli in Ann Arbor Michigan is famous for its bread, cheeses, meat and sandwiches. You can order a [Reuben Sandwich Kit](https://www.zingermans.com/) – they'll send you everything you need to make a pretty amazing Reuben (almost as good as being in your favorite deli!). <https://www.zingermans.com/>