

Panzanella (Tuscan Tomato Salad)  
Recipe provided by John May/Pat Gualtieri

Serves 4

**Ingredients:**

3 cups packed, torn pieces sourdough bread (including crusts; from an 8-ounce loaf)  
1/4 cup olive oil  
2 1/4 pounds ripe heirloom tomatoes, hulled and cut into bite-size wedges  
1 teaspoon kosher or sea salt, plus more as needed  
1 teaspoon minced garlic  
1 Tablespoon minced shallot  
1 Tablespoon white wine vinegar  
Freshly cracked black pepper  
10 fresh basil leaves, stacked, rolled and cut into very thin slices (chiffonade)

**Procedure:**

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Place the bread pieces in a bowl and drizzle them with half the oil and toss to coat. Arrange the pieces on a rimmed baking sheet, then bake for 15 minutes, until the bread is dried and fragrant but not browned. Let cool.

Meanwhile, place the tomatoes in a colander set over a mixing bowl. Sprinkle the tomatoes with the teaspoon of salt; let them drain for about 20 minutes (**no more**), gently tossing them every few minutes. Transfer the tomatoes to a serving bowl along with the cooled bread pieces; toss to incorporate. Reserve the tomato juices in their bowl; there should be a scant half-cup.

Add the garlic, shallot, and vinegar to those juices, then gradually whisk in the remaining 2 Tablespoons of oil to form an emulsified vinaigrette. Season lightly with salt and pepper. Pour over the tomato-bread mixture; use your clean hands to gently toss and coat.

Scatter the basil over the salad; serve right away.

Possible additions:

Roasted pine nuts  
Bite size chunks of fresh Mozzarella cheese  
Grated Parmesan  
Chicken nuggets (cold)