

Sicilian Avocado Toast

By Laura Cinquemani-Rojahn

This is a filling and healthy snack that can be enjoyed at any meal! Caponata, a tomato-based Sicilian spread, deliciously pairs with the creaminess of avocado and toasty bread. For a nightshade family allergy, replace the tomato and bell pepper with diced portobello mushrooms, and the eggplant with one large zucchini. The caponata tastes best when it's made the day before it is served, and refrigerated overnight. I use the Yeast Free Quick Bread recipe (shown in photo below) from the "Gluten Free One-Mix Specialties" book, but any loaf of bread that meets your food allergy needs will work. Homemade bread works best since it can be sliced thick.

Ingredients:

1 large eggplant (1.5 lbs.; 680 g)
3 T. olive oil, divided (45 ml)
1 medium onion, chopped
2 stalks of celery, sliced
4 large garlic cloves, minced (20 g)
1 medium red bell pepper, diced
1 t. table salt, divided (6 g)
1 14.5 oz. can fire roasted, diced tomatoes (411 g)
2 T. honey, divided (44 g)
4 T. capers (44 g)
12 pitted green olives, roughly chopped (40 g)
3 T. red wine vinegar (45 ml)
Ground black pepper and salt to taste
2 ripe avocados
1 loaf of gluten free bread



Directions:

Step 1. Start by making the caponata. **Pre-heat the oven to 400°F (204°C).** Lay a sheet of aluminum foil on top of a cookie sheet; spray it with cooking oil. Peel the eggplant. Cut it into 0.5-inch-thick (1-cm-thick) round slices and then into bite size pieces. Place the eggplant on top of the aluminum foil. Drizzle 1 Tablespoon (15 ml) of olive oil on it. Fold the foil over the eggplant and seal it. Roast the eggplant in the oven for **30 minutes**. Remove it from the oven and keep it warm in the foil until Step 5.

Step 2. While the eggplant is cooking in the oven, heat 1 Tablespoon (15 ml) of oil in a large frying pan over **medium heat**. Add the chopped onion and celery, and sauté for **5 minutes**.

Step 3. Add the minced garlic and sauté for **one minute**.

Step 4. Mix in the diced red bell pepper and ½ teaspoon (3 g) of salt. Cook **8 to 10 minutes** until soft.

Step 5. Stir in another Tablespoon (15 ml) of oil and the chopped eggplant; cook for **5 minutes** until tender.

Step 6. Add the can of tomatoes, ½ teaspoon (3 g) of salt, and 1 Tablespoon (22 g) of honey. Cook on **medium heat**, scraping the pan bottom to prevent burning, for **5 to 10 minutes** until the tomatoes have broken down.

Step 7. Add the capers, olives, 1 Tablespoon (22 g) of honey, and vinegar. Cook **20 to 30 minutes**, stirring frequently. (Note: add more or less capers and olives to suit your taste.)

Step 8. Season to taste with salt and black pepper. Remove from the heat; place in a covered glass container, and refrigerate overnight.

Step 9. Right before serving, slice the avocados in half, remove and discard the pit, and scoop out the soft flesh from the peel. Place the flesh in a bowl, and mash with the back of a fork.

Step 10. Slice 1-inch-thick (2.5-cm-thick) slices of bread, one per serving, and toast.

Step 11. Slather the mashed avocado on top of the toast, spreading evenly, and then spoon the chilled caponata on top. Enjoy!

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