



Chicken and Artichoke Pesto Panzanella/ Sandwich

NIBBLEDISH CONTRIBUTOR

Ingredients

½ to 1 loaf of bread of your choice (I used a mix of Tuscan and wheat)

* Use ¼ to ½ loaf for salad and a full loaf for 4 sandwiches

Chicken, Turkey or Tuna Mix:

1- 1 ½ cups cooked rotisserie chicken, turkey or tuna, shredded (I used leftover rotisserie chicken.)

¼-½ cup pesto (recipe below or use store-bought although I think it's much better homemade)

14 oz. canned artichoke hearts

a handful of chopped sun-dried tomatoes- optional

¼ cup red onion, diced

2 tbsp kalamata olives-optional

2- 4 oz. fresh mozzarella, sliced for sandwich or cut into bite-sized pieces for salad

sprinkle some golden raisins for a hint of sweetness-optional but highly recommended

Dressing: (optional)

1 clove of garlic, minced

1 tbsp capers, smashed- optional

salt/pepper

3 tbsp balsamic or white wine vinegar

1/3 cup olive oil

Pesto:

3 cups basil leaves

½ cup Parmesan

2 cloves of garlic, minced

1/3 cup pine nuts, toasted

½ to ¾ cup olive oil

Salt/pepper

Place all but the olive oil in a food processor. Pulse until combined and then add olive oil and pulse again to desired consistency. Save the leftovers for sandwiches, dip or whatever you wish.

Instructions

Bread for Salad:

Preheat the oven to 350. Cut ½ loaf of bread into bite-sized pieces and place on baking sheet. Bake for about 10 minutes, until golden and allow to cool and become crisp. If not serving within a half hour, place in an airtight container and set aside. If serving within a half an hour, make dressing and allow bread to soak it up before tossing with mix.

If making your own pesto, do this first. Then, toss, in a large bowl, all the mix ingredients and refrigerate or set aside if serving soon (while bread is soaking up dressing). When ready to serve, add mix to bread soaked in dressing. If you don't think you will eat all of this salad, keep bread, dressing and mix separate until 30 minutes before serving the remainder. The bread will be too soggy if you don't do this. I add the bread in individual servings or keep the remaining mix for sandwiches (see below).

For sandwich:

Preheat the oven to 350. Cut loaf in half and add sliced mozzarella and bake for 10-15 minutes, until cheese is melted. The dressing is not used for the sandwich. While this is toasting, make pesto (if making your own) and mix. Add the mix to the sandwich when it comes out of the oven and serve right away.