

Fresh Mozzarella and Other Italian Cheeses

Fresh Mozzarella, Tomato and Prosciutto Sandwich

Thin Crust Cheese Pizza

Mascarpone Tarts with Roasted Tomato Relish

Stuffed Pork Tenderloin

Ricotta Cheesecake with Fresh Fruit Coulis

Fresh Mozzarella, Tomato and Prosciutto Sandwich

1 baguette, split
½ pound fresh mozzarella, thinly sliced
4 small tomatoes, sliced
¼ pound imported prosciutto, thinly sliced

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
2 basil leaves, thinly sliced
½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
Salt and pepper

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Lay bottom of baguette on a clean work surface. Top with mozzarella, tomatoes and prosciutto.
3. Mix the oil, vinegar and Dijon in a small bowl. Stir in basil; season with salt and pepper. Pour dressing over tomatoes. Cover with top half of baguette.
4. Bake until just warmed. Cut into pieces and serve.

Thin Crust Cheese Pizza

1 batch pizza dough
1 batch pizza sauce
2 cups shredded fontina cheese
2 cups shredded asiago cheese
Pecorino romano cheese
Fresh basil
Olive oil
Sea Salt

1. Place a pizza stone in the oven and preheat to 500 degrees.
2. Stretch 1 piece of dough into a 14-inch round. Transfer to a pizza peel and top with sauce. Sprinkle half of cheese over sauce. Season with basil, oil and salt.
3. Transfer pizza to oven and bake until cheese is bubbly and crust is browned. Let cool slightly and serve.

Pizza Dough (makes 2 14" pizzas)

- 1 tablespoon yeast
- 1-1/3 cups warm water
- 3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

4. Mix yeast and water in a small bowl. Let stand five minutes.
5. Add the flour, sugar and salt to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a dough hook. With mixer on medium-low speed, add water to flour. Mix to combine, adding more water or flour as needed to form a ball. Knead dough for 8 minutes.
6. Turn out dough onto floured board and knead an additional minute by hand. Divide dough in two and form each half into a ball. Place each half in separate floured bowls, sprinkle with additional flour and cover loosely with plastic wrap. Set in refrigerator. Remove from refrigerator 1/2 hour before forming dough.

Pizza Sauce

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- Pinch of red pepper flakes
- 1 28-ounce can tomato puree
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

1. In a saucepan, heat olive oil to medium heat. Add garlic, red pepper and oregano. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes but do not let the garlic become browned. Lower heat and add tomatoes, sugar and salt.
2. Bring back up to a simmer, stirring to combine oil and tomatoes. Simmer for 20 to 25 minutes or until the sauce thickens and the flavors meld. Cool.

Stuffed Pork Tenderloin

2 ounces pancetta, diced
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
5 ounces spinach, trimmed and finely chopped
1 cup shredded fontina cheese
1 tablespoon oil
1 pork tenderloin, butterflied
Salt and pepper

1. Add pancetta to a heavy skillet and cook over medium heat until fat is rendered and pancetta is golden. Add garlic and cook 2 minutes more. Add spinach and cook until wilted and tender. Transfer to a bowl and stir in cheese. Season with salt and pepper. Let cool.
2. Preheat oven to 425°F with rack in middle. Place filling down the center of the tenderloin. Roll up tenderloin tightly a secure with kitchen twine. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Bring skillet to high heat and add the oil. Sear pork, turning occasionally, until golden brown. Transfer skillet to oven and roast until internal temperature reaches 150 degrees. Remove and let rest five minutes.

Mascarpone Tarts

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 stick butter
½ teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons ice water

2 tablespoons olive oil
1-½ cups sliced leeks
1-½ cups fresh corn kernels
1 cup mascarpone
½ cup heavy cream
2 large eggs, at room temperature
3 tablespoons grated Pecorino Romano cheese
Fresh thyme
Salt and pepper

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Add flour and salt to the bowl of a food processor. Pulse in butter until mixture forms a coarse meal. Add the water and pulse until dough forms a ball. Turn out on to a lightly floured board and gather in a ball. Flatten into a disk, wrap in plastic and refrigerate 30 minutes. Take out and roll into an 11-inch circle. Transfer to a 9-inch tart pan and trim excess. Prick bottom with a fork; blind bake until golden, about 15 minutes. Let cool.
2. Bring a large skillet to medium heat and add the oil. Cook the leeks until tender; add the corn and cook 2 minutes more. Season with thyme, salt and pepper. Let cool.
3. Beat together the mascarpone and cream until smooth. Add the eggs and cheese; season with salt pepper. Fold in the leek mixture. Transfer to the tart pan. Bake until puffed and lightly golden, about 25 minutes.

Roasted Tomato Relish

1 28-ounce can whole tomatoes
4 clove garlic, halved
4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 medium onions, diced
¼ cup pine nuts
3 tablespoons currants
3 tablespoons capers
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
Salt and pepper

1. Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Drain tomatoes, reserving juice. Halve tomatoes and place in a casserole dish just large enough to hold them in a single layer. Tuck garlic around tomatoes, drizzle with 2 tablespoons olive oil and season with salt. Roast until tender, about 1-1/2 hours. Let cool. Chop tomatoes and mash garlic. Transfer to a mixing bowl.
2. Add remaining oil to a skillet and bring to medium low heat. Add the onions and cook until golden brown. Add the pine nuts and cook until toasted. Transfer to bowl with tomatoes; add in currants and capers. Stir in balsamic vinegar and some of the tomato juice. Season with salt and pepper.

Ricotta Cheesecake with Fresh Fruit Coulis

3 tablespoons finely crushed amaretti
2 pounds fresh ricotta, at room temperature
6 large eggs, at room temperature
2/3 cup sugar
¼ cup all-purpose flour
1-½ teaspoons grated lemon zest
4 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon cinnamon

1 cup blueberries
1 cup strawberries
½ cup simple syrup

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Lightly butter 8-inch springform pan; coat with cookie crumbs.
2. Beat together remaining ingredients and pour into crust.
3. Bake until puffed and golden but center is still slightly wobbly, about 1-½ hours. Cool slightly. Run a knife around the edge of the cake and loosen sides. Let cool to room temperature.
4. Add berries to a blender along with simple syrup. Puree until smooth. Press through a fine mesh strainer. Serve over cheesecake.