



Watermelon Panzanella

A refreshing take on the classic Tuscan salad typically made with stale crusty bread and summer-ripe tomatoes. Panzanella is best eaten the day it is made. Do not refrigerate because you will ruin the texture and flavor of the tomatoes.

- 1/2 (16-ounce) loaf Ciabatta, cut into 3/4-inch cubes
- 1/4 cup plus 1 tablespoon light olive oil
- 1-2 ears fresh corn, kernels removed (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 4 cups seedless watermelon, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 large beefsteak tomatoes, seeded and cut into 1-inch pieces (about 2 cups)
- 1/2 medium red onion, thinly sliced
- 3 tablespoons champagne vinegar
- 1 teaspoon honey
- Kosher salt
- Coarse-ground black pepper
- 10 large fresh basil leaves
- 3 strips cooked thick-cut bacon, chopped

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Toss the bread cubes with 1 tablespoon olive oil and place on a foil-lined baking sheet. Bake until golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Cool completely on a wire rack.

Bring a saucepan of salted water to a boil. Add the corn kernels, and cook for 7 minutes. Drain, and cool completely. Add the corn, watermelon, tomatoes, onions and bread cubes to a large bowl.

Whisk 1/4 cup olive oil, vinegar and honey in a small bowl until thoroughly combined. Toss the vinaigrette with the bread cubes and watermelon mixture until coated. Season, to taste, with salt and pepper. Let the salad stand for 30 minutes.

Tear the basil into the salad and toss to combine. Sprinkle with chopped bacon before serving.

Makes 8 servings