

In the Chianti area of Italy (Tuscany), the bread is unsalted. And, a good cook has to know many recipes for the use of left over stale bread. This bread salad is absolutely delicious at this time of year when the tomatoes fresh from the farmer are so good.

Tante Marie's Panzanella (Tuscan Bread Salad)

Ingredients

1/2 lb. crusty country bread, cut into 1-inch cubes
2 to 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1/2 cup olive oil
2 large tomatoes, cut in 1-inch pieces
1 small red onion, chopped
1/3 cup black olives, pitted
1 bunch whole basil leaves
4 Tbs. Balsamic or red wine vinegar
1/3 cup olive oil
coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper

Instructions

In a large bowl, place the garlic and the olive oil. Toss in the bread all at once and stir rapidly to coat evenly. Place the bread on a baking sheet in a 350 degree oven and bake until golden. Return the bread to the bowl, add the tomatoes, onions, olives and basil.

In a small bowl, mix the vinegar with a pinch of salt until dissolved, and whisk in the olive oil. Toss with the salad, add salt and pepper to taste, and serve.

Serves 4.