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Polenta Crostini with Goat Cheese, Cherry Tomatoes & Chives

Makes about 25 - 30 crostini

These crostini are unique! The base is made from crispy, baked polenta rounds instead of bread. The delicious polenta rounds are topped with creamy goat cheese, blistered cherry tomatoes and a sprinkle of fresh chives. It's a festive and colorful bite nicely composed.

Ingredients:

4 cups water
2 teaspoons Kosher salt
1 cup cornmeal (medium or coarse works best)
1 cup freshly grated Parmesan
1 tablespoons fresh thyme, minced
Freshly ground pepper

4 ounces goat cheese
1 pint cherry tomatoes
1 tablespoon olive oil
Chives, sliced
Kosher salt (or flake salt), and pepper, for garnish

Directions:

1. Prepare the polenta in a saucepan. Bring the water to a boil, and whisk in the cornmeal and salt.
2. Bring to a simmer for 5 minutes, then reduce heat to low. Simmer on low for 10 minutes or until the polenta is creamy. Stir in the Parmesan cheese, thyme, and pepper.
3. Prepare a baking sheet by lining it with parchment paper. Pour the polenta on the baking sheet and spread in a thin 1/4" layer. Cover with another layer of parchment paper, and press down evenly with another baking sheet to form a very evenly thick layer.
4. Refrigerate for 1 hour, until the polenta sheet has thoroughly cooled.
5. Use a 2" biscuit cutter, and cut rounds from the polenta sheet. Or use a knife and cut into triangles or squares.
6. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Place the polenta crostini rounds on a baking sheet, and bake for about 14-16 minutes, or until the rounds turn golden brown and crispy. Let the crostini cool on the pan for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire cooling rack to finish cool completely.
7. While the crostini are baking, blister the cherry tomatoes in a skillet with a tablespoon of olive oil until they have just bursted.
8. Smear each crispy crostini with goat cheese, add a blistered cherry tomato, and garnish with chives and a sprinkle of Kosher salt and pepper. Serve immediately.