



THE UNDERWEAR GOURMET

Appetizer

Antipasto with Red Pepper Tapenade



Recipe courtesy Rachael Ray

In this 30 Minute Meal, I cook out of my cupboard, my pantry and with veggies and herbs I always have on hand. This menu is an example of what I cook up when I just can't find the energy to stop at the market on my way home. If you keep your favorite essentials on hand, dinner is never more than 30 minutes -- and a little imagination -- away.

Ingredients:

Red Pepper Tapenade and Charred Bread:

1/2 loaf day old crusty bread, sliced *
2 large cloves garlic, cracked
Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling
1 (16 to 18-ounce) jar roasted red peppers, drained
1/4 cup parsley leaves, a couple of handfuls
1/4 cup black oil-cured olives, 20 olives
2 tablespoons capers, drained

Antipasto:

Italian tuna in oil, 4 ounces
1 jar marinated artichokes, 6 ounces
Hot peppers, cheery peppers, Banana peppers or pepperoncini
1/2 pound sliced Italian deli meats, such as hot or sweet sopressata, Genoa salami
1/2 pound assorted Italian cheeses, sliced or cubed, such as asiago, provolone, pepato black pepper cheese, smoked mozzarella, red pepper flake sheep's milk cheese -- these are my favorites, choose a few like to keep on hand

Procedure:

If your slices are wider than a few inches, cut each slice in 1/2. Char pieces of bread under hot broiler to toast and crisp. Rub with cracked garlic and drizzle bread with extra-virgin olive oil.

Place roasted red peppers in a food processor with parsley. Place a few olives at a time under the flat of a knife and whack with the heel of your hand. Discard olive pits. Add olives to the food processor. Drain a few spoonfuls of capers and add to processor. Pulse the processor and grind into a paste. Transfer to a small dish.

Arrange tuna, artichokes, hot peppers, meats and cheeses on a platter and serve with charred bread and red pepper spread for all-evening snacking.

* Often I will freeze 1/2 a loaf, defrost it in the morning the day I want to use it, then prepare crostini or bruschetta with it.