



courtesy of Who Are Those Guys? BBQ Competition Cooking Team
<http://www.watgbq.com/>

Stacked Summer Tomato Salad with Tapenade and Basil Dressing

In case you haven't noticed, I am obsessed with tomatoes or 'maters as they are known around here. I anxiously await their arrival each July and mourn their passing in mid to late October. I have too much shade where I live to grow any type of a garden. I have found over the years, by whining to your neighbors about the inability to have a garden, they feel sorry for you, or they tire of hearing the story, and offer you veggies from their garden during the season. Either way, it ain't a bad deal! I will never understand why a local restaurant serves a sandwich or dish during the summer with a pink, tasteless, truck farm tomato impersonator on board, it just doesn't make good sense. The other noted tomato disappointment is the proliferation of varieties that last longer or travel better. Slice into one of these newer 'maters and you'll find a reduction in the amount of seeds and gel, you know, the good stuff, where the flavor is. The heirloom or older varieties have much more flavor but do have a reduced life while sitting on the window sill. The good thing is around here, they don't get a chance to go bad; they are consumed all too quickly. Stewed in a bowl, BLT's, quartered and chilled in a bowl with steamed crabs, with mayo salt and pepper on white bread, the list goes on and on, ahhh, summer in Maryland.

Serves 8

Tapenade

2 cups pitted Kalamata olives (about 10 ounces)
4 cloves garlic
4 anchovy fillets
2 TBS pine nuts
½ cup olive oil

Blend olives, garlic, anchovies, and nuts in a food processor until just smooth. With machine still running add oil, process until blended. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer to bowl, cover and chill. (can be made 2 days in advance)

Dressing

¼ cup white wine vinegar
3 TBS honey
1 TBS Dijon mustard
¾ cup olive oil
12 large fresh basil leaves, chopped
A few flakes of red pepper to taste (optional)

Whisk vinegar, honey, oil, basil and mustard in bowl. Salt and pepper to taste. Let stand at room temperature. (can be made 8 hours in advance)

Salad

8 – 10 large ripe tomatoes, (prefer heirloom, multi colored) sliced crosswise to ¼-½ inch
2- 8 oz balls drained fresh water packed mozzarella, cut into ½ inch slices.
Select tomato slices similar in diameter, you will need 24 slices of tomato and 16 cheese slices for 8 servings.

Place 1 tomato slice on each plate, spread with tapenade, top with cheese round. Repeat layering. Top each stack with third tomato slice.

Chop remaining tomato slices, place in bowl and toss with 3 TBS dressing.

Spoon some dressing over each stack. Spoon chopped tomatoes along side.

Garnish with basil sprigs.