

## Fried Green Tomato Salad with Basil Vinaigrette

The dressing in this recipe calls for basil oil, which takes about 5 minutes to make and is worth the effort. (Recipe below) It really makes this a very special salad. If you don't want to make the basil oil, just use regular extra virgin olive oil, and garnish the salad with some fresh julienned basil leaves.

Serves 4

### Dressing:

- 4 Tablespoons champagne or white wine vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon honey
- 1 teaspoon Diamond Crystal Kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 cup basil oil (recipe below)

### Tomatoes:

- 4 medium to large unripe (firm) green tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon Diamond Crystal Kosher salt
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup Panko breadcrumbs
- 1/2 cup loosely packed Italian parsley leaves, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 quart vegetable oil for frying

### Salad:

- 4 cups arugula
- 2 cups cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
- 1 ripe red or yellow tomato, cut into wedges
- 4 ounces burrata, bocconcini or other fresh mozzarella cheese, torn into small pieces

1. Place vinegar, honey, salt, and pepper in a small mason jar. Secure lid and shake well. Add basil oil and shake again.
2. Line a baking sheet with paper towels. Slice tomatoes 1/2 inch thick. Lay tomato slices on paper towel lined baking sheet. Sprinkle tomatoes with salt. Let tomatoes sit for 10 minutes while you prepare breading ingredients.
3. Set out 3 medium sized shallow bowls. Whisk eggs in the first bowl. Put flour into the second bowl. Mix Panko breadcrumbs, chopped parsley and Parmesan in the third bowl.
4. Dip tomato slices into flour to coat. Then dip the tomatoes into the beaten eggs. Finally, dredge slices in breadcrumb mixture to completely coat.
5. In a 12-inch skillet, (cast iron if you have it) pour vegetable oil so that there is 1/2 inch of oil in the pan and heat over a medium heat. If you have an instant read thermometer, now is the time to bust it out. Check oil temperature. Ideally, you are aiming for 350°F.

6. Place tomatoes into the frying pan in batches of 4 or 5, depending on the size of your skillet. Do not crowd the tomatoes, they should not touch each other. When the tomatoes are browned, flip, and fry them on the other side. Drain them on paper towels.
7. Toss arugula with a few tablespoons of dressing. Arrange on a large platter. Scatter halved cherry tomatoes and tomato wedges. Arrange fried green tomatoes on top of arugula bed. Scatter with cheese and drizzle more dressing on top to taste.

## Basil Oil

1. Place 1/2 cup basil leaves, (loosely packed in measuring cup) and 1 cup extra virgin olive oil in a high-speed blender. Blend on high for 10 to 30 seconds. Transfer to a small saucepan and bring to a simmer. Gently simmer the oil for 1 minute to set the color.

2. Pour the oil into a fine mesh strainer, set over a bowl and lined with cheesecloth. Allow to drain for 5 minutes. Transfer to glass jar and allow to cool. Once cooled, it can be stored the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks.