

Salt and Serenity

Rhubarb and Ricotta Tartine

Tartine is French for “open-faced sandwich”. They make a great appetizer to have with drinks or a nice light lunch served with a salad.

Makes 4 open faced sandwiches.

The recipe makes more rhubarb than you will need for 4 sandwiches. Leftover roasted rhubarb will keep for a few days in the fridge and is excellent mixed into yogurt for breakfast. I prefer to roast the rhubarb in the oven, rather than poach it on top of the stove, as it is a gentler cooking method and allows the rhubarb to keep its shape, rather than getting all mushed up. It's purely an aesthetic thing. The tartines look prettier with whole pieces of rhubarb perched on the toast like little jewels.

In this variation, I finished the tartine with some chopped pistachios and fresh mint. It is also delicious topped with pistachios, pickled red onions and arugula, which is how I styled it in the video of this blog post.

Roasted Rhubarb:

400 grams rhubarb (about 6-8 stalks, depending on thickness), cut on diagonal into 2-inch-long pieces

56 grams ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup) water

148 grams ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) granulated sugar

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon Diamond Crystal kosher salt

4 slices good quality bread (such as sourdough, multi-grain or any loaf with some heft and chew), toasted

1 cup ricotta cheese (if you have 15 minutes, **homemade recipe below**)

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup toasted chopped pistachios

8 fresh sprigs mint, leaves washed and coarsely chopped

Flaky sea salt and black pepper

2 teaspoons honey

1. **Roast rhubarb:** Preheat oven to 400°F. In a Pyrex 9x13 baking dish, combine water, sugar, and salt. Arrange rhubarb pieces in dish in a single layer. Roast for 7 minutes. Spoon juices over the rhubarb. Roast for a further 5 minutes, just until the rhubarb is tender. Using a spatula, carefully transfer rhubarb pieces to a baking sheet. Pour any juices into a small container and reserve for assembly.
2. Spread ricotta on each slice. Top with a few pieces of rhubarb. Sprinkle with chopped pistachios, mint leaves and salt and pepper. Drizzle on honey. Serve right away.

Homemade Ricotta Cheese

This recipe comes from the September 2009 issue of *Cook's Illustrated*. The real key to good ricotta is to handle it as little as possible. Don't stir too hard and be very gentle with the curds once they form.

1 6 cups homogenized milk (whole milk)
1 teaspoon table salt
1 1/2 - 3/4 cups fresh lemon juice (about 5-6 lemons)

1. Heat milk and salt in 7-quart Dutch oven over medium-high, stirring frequently with rubber spatula to prevent scorching, until milk registers 185 degrees F on instant read thermometer, about 15 minutes.
2. Remove pot from heat. Using rubber spatula, slowly stir in 1/2 cup lemon juice until fully incorporated, 15 seconds. Allow milk to stand, undisturbed for 5 minutes. After 5 minutes milk should separate into white solid curds and translucent liquid whey. If after 5 minutes whey is still milky and opaque, add 2 more tablespoons lemon juice, gently stir to combine, and let rest 5 minutes longer. Check separation again and repeat with another 2 tablespoons juice until whey is no longer opaque (depending on your milk, whey may appear different shades of yellow or blue). Once milk is separated into curds and whey allow pot to rest for 20 minutes.
3. Line colander or large strainer with double layer of cheesecloth and set over sink. Using large slotted spoon, carefully spoon curds into colander. Discard whey. Using rubber spatula, gently fold curds over themselves until liquid no longer runs out of colander and curds have texture of grainy cream cheese. Use immediately or transfer to an airtight container and refrigerate for up to 4 days.