

Eggplant & Mozzarella Paninis

with Caramelized Stone Fruit & Arugula Salad

The panini is an Italian sandwich that's traditionally toasted on a grill or in a press. In this recipe, we're making gourmet ciabatta, eggplant and mozzarella paninis on the stove, using a heavy pot to press them down and create their distinctive, crispy texture. On the side, we're serving a classic tomato sauce, along with an incredibly tasty treat: a salad of caramelized stone fruit and arugula. When heated, the stone fruit's natural sugars caramelize and brown, resulting in rich, complex sweetness—the perfect pairing for the hearty, melty sandwiches.



Ingredients

- 2 Ciabatta Rolls
- 8 Ounces Fresh Mozzarella Cheese
- 1 15-Ounce Can Crushed Tomatoes
- 3 Cloves Garlic
- 3 Ounces Arugula
- 1 Stone Fruit
- 1 Eggplant
- 1 Bunch Basil

Knick Knacks

- 1 Tablespoon Dijon Mustard
- 1 Tablespoon Red Wine Vinegar

Makes 2 Servings

About 630 Calories Per Serving

Prep Time: 10 min | Cook Time: 35 to 45 min



1

**Prepare the ingredients:**

Wash and dry the fresh produce. Peel and mince the garlic. Pit and thinly slice the stone fruit. Cut off and discard the stem end of the eggplant; slice into ½-inch-thick rounds. Thinly slice the mozzarella cheese. Halve the ciabatta rolls horizontally. Pick the basil leaves off the stems; discard the stems.

2

**Make the sauce:**

In a medium pot, heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil on medium until hot. Add the **garlic**; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, 30 seconds to 1 minute, or until fragrant. Add the **crushed tomatoes**; reduce the heat to low. Simmer, stirring occasionally, 14 to 16 minutes, or until thickened. Remove from heat and season with salt and pepper to taste.

3

**Caramelize the stone fruit & make the dressing:**

While the sauce simmers, in a large pan (nonstick, if you have one), heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the **stone fruit**; season with salt and pepper. Cook, flipping occasionally, 3 to 5 minutes, or until caramelized and slightly softened. Transfer to a plate. Wipe out the pan. While the stone fruit caramelizes, in a bowl, combine the **vinegar** and **mustard**; season with salt and pepper to taste. Slowly whisk in **2 tablespoons of olive oil** until well combined.

4

**Cook the eggplant:**

In the pan used to caramelize the stone fruit, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the **eggplant** in a single, even layer. (If necessary, work in batches.) Season with salt and pepper. Cook 3 to 5 minutes per side, or until browned and tender. Transfer to a plate. Wipe out the pan.

5

**Assemble & toast the paninis:**

Place the **ciabatta rolls** on a clean, dry work surface. Spread a **layer of the sauce** onto the cut sides of each roll (you will have extra sauce). Divide the **mozzarella cheese** and **half the basil** between the bottoms of the rolls; season with salt and pepper. Top with the **cooked eggplant** and the tops of the rolls. In the pan used to cook the eggplant, heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil on medium until hot. Add the **assembled paninis**; place a heavy pot on top of the paninis to press them down. Cook 2 to 4 minutes per side, or until the cheese has melted and the bread is toasted. Transfer to a cutting board to cool slightly.

6

**Make the salad & plate your dish:**

In a large bowl, combine the **caramelized stone fruit**, **arugula** and **remaining basil**; season with salt and pepper. Add as much of the **dressing** as you'd like; toss to thoroughly coat and season with salt and pepper to taste. Cut the **toasted paninis** in half diagonally and divide between 2 plates. Serve with the **salad** and **remaining sauce** on the side. Enjoy!