

Cherry Tomato Frittata with Corn, Basil and Goat Cheese

Combining fresh cherry tomatoes, sweet corn and aromatic basil, this frittata showcases summer ingredients at their peak of flavor.

In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, cream, 4 oz. of the goat cheese, 2 Tbs. of the basil, the lemon zest, the 1¼ tsp. salt, the red pepper flakes and black pepper. Set aside.

In the deep half of a frittata pan over medium heat, melt 1 Tbs. of the butter. Add the corn and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the egg mixture and cook, gently scraping the sides and bottom of the pan with a rubber spatula to allow the uncooked eggs to flow underneath, about 2 minutes. Reduce the heat to low, place the shallow pan upside down on top of the deep pan and cook until the frittata is partially set, about 5 minutes. Remove the shallow pan and arrange the cherry tomatoes and the remaining 2 oz. goat cheese on top of the frittata. Cover with the shallow pan and cook until the eggs are almost completely set, 7 to 9 minutes more.

Remove the shallow pan, set it over medium heat and melt the remaining 1 Tbs. butter. Place the shallow pan upside down on top of the deep pan and flip the frittata into the shallow pan. Cook, covered, until the eggs are completely set, about 3 minutes. Flip the frittata back into the deep pan, remove the shallow pan and gently shake the deep pan to loosen the frittata.

Slide the frittata onto a cutting board. Top with the remaining 1 Tbs. basil and a sprinkle of salt. Cut into 8 wedges and serve. Serves 8.

Williams-Sonoma Kitchen

Fire-Roasted Corn Salad

Made with fresh corn and tomatoes plus tangy feta cheese, this salad is the perfect summer side dish for grilled meats.

In a bowl, whisk together the lime juice, ground cumin and chili powder. Pour in the ¾ cup olive oil in a slow, steady stream while whisking to make a vinaigrette. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Prepare a medium-hot fire in a grill. Brush a little olive oil on each ear of corn. Grill the corn, turning the ears often so they cook evenly, until lightly charred, about 10 minutes.

Steady each ear of corn on a cutting board and, using a sharp knife, cut down along the cob to strip off the kernels. Alternatively, remove the kernels with a kernel cutter. Put the kernels in a large bowl. Add the tomatoes, onion, cilantro, feta and the vinaigrette and toss to coat evenly. Transfer the salad to a platter and sprinkle with the cumin seeds. Serve immediately. Serves 8.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma *Entertaining*, Edited by Chuck Williams (Oxmoor House, 2004).

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Tips for the Farmers' Market

- **Buy Something New:** Shopping at a farmers' market opens your eyes to new varieties of vegetables and fruits. Each time you go, don't be afraid to choose one or two produce items that you've never cooked with before.
- **Be Flexible:** While you may head to the market with the outline of a meal and a general list, be ready to change your plan if the items you need are not in season.
- **Taste Before You Buy:** Many farmers' market vendors offer samples of their products and encourage you to taste. Peaches, for example, can vary from highly acidic to super sweet. You won't know what you prefer until you try what's available. Sampling is a great way to learn more about the different varieties of produce within a family or new hybrids or heirlooms that are specially suited to your climate.
- **Bring Your Own Bags:** You can lessen your impact on the environment by bringing your own bags to the market. If you are not returning home right away, bring a small ice chest for perishables.

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Technique Class: Farm to Table

The farmers' market is becoming the town square of modern times. Not only can you shop there for impeccably fresh foods, you can catch up with your friends as you browse; you can introduce your children to the pleasures of fresh food; and you can ask the apple grower about the best way to cook his prized fruits. In short, regular visits to the farmers' market help make your whole life more vibrant.

Summer's Gold—Sweet Corn

One of the joys of summer in temperate climates is eating freshly picked sweet corn. Actually a grain whose large, fleshy seeds are cooked and eaten as a vegetable, corn was first cultivated nearly 7,000 years ago in Central America. It is also known as maize and has long been celebrated as one of the most important foods in the world. Most ears found at farmers' markets are tender, high-sugar varieties with small yellow kernels. Look for specialty types with white kernels; a combination of white, yellow and red; or even deep purplish blue, a special hybrid primarily grown in the Southwest United States and Mexico.

Corn lovers eagerly anticipate its arrival at markets during the summer. Purists insist on cooking corn on the cob only until warmed through, either boiled or steamed, to preserve its sweetness and crunch. Cut from the cob, the fresh kernels can be added raw to salads and salsas, cooked until creamy for soups and chowders, deep-fried in fritters, or folded into savory quick breads and fillings.

Buying Sweet Corn

Choose ears with green husks and no signs of browning or drying. They should feel cool, never noticeably warm. The silk tassels should be pale yellow and moist. Select ears with plump, juicy kernels that are tightly packed in even rows. Store unshucked ears in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for no more than 1 day.

Working with Sweet Corn

Pull off the husks and silk from each ear. Snap the leaves off the bottom along with any remaining stem, or bend the leaves down to surround the stem to create a handle for serving corncobs whole. Strands of silk adhering to the kernels can be removed by scrubbing the ears with a vegetable brush under cold running water.

Mincing Fresh Herbs

Rinse the herbs far enough ahead of time for them to dry fully, or use a paper towel to pat them dry. Otherwise, they will stick to the knife.

Remove the leaves and discard the thick stems (or reserve for adding to the stockpot). Then, keeping fingers safely clear, chop the leaves with a good-size chef's knife, holding down the knife tip with one hand so that it never leaves the cutting board and moving your chopping wrist and hand rhythmically. Gather the herbs repeatedly into smaller and tighter clumps and chop until they are as fine as you want them. As a rule, herbs are finely chopped. A pair of kitchen shears or a mezzaluna also comes in handy for mincing.

Some recipes call for cutting herbs or other leafy ingredients, such as lettuce, into chiffonade. First remove and discard the stems, then stack 3 to 5 leaves on top of each other on a cutting board. Gently but firmly roll the leaves into a cylinder and grasp it securely with one hand. Using a sharp knife, carefully cut the rolled leaves crosswise at ⅛-inch intervals to make thin strips.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma Kitchen Companion (Time-Life Books, 2000).

Ingredients for Corn Chowder

4 bacon slices, minced

1 yellow onion, cut into small dice

12 ears of corn, kernels removed, 6 corncobs reserved

6 cups milk

2 russet potatoes, peeled and cut into small dice

Salt, to taste

Cayenne pepper, to taste

¼ cup chopped fresh chives

Totally Tomato

Once feared as poison, tomatoes are botanically a fruit of the nightshade category. Tomatoes, native to South America, have spread during the last few centuries and have adapted to virtually every country on the globe. The tomato comes in a wide range of sizes, from tiny currant tomatoes no bigger than blueberries to fat beefsteaks up to 5 inches in diameter. The colors of heritage varieties span the spectrum, from white to yellow to green zebra stripes, from pink to orange to deep violet black.

The most flavorful tomatoes appear in farmers’ markets from mid-summer to early autumn. Purists enjoy them sliced thickly and served with a mere sprinkling of coarse salt. Pureed into soup, layered in sandwiches, tossed in salads, simmered for pasta or roasted for salsa, tomatoes add color and flavor to our table in a multitude of delicious ways.

Buying Tomatoes

Tomatoes are best when eaten at the height of the summer season. For optimum flavor, choose those that are ripened on the vine and are bright in color. Tomatoes can be stored at room temperature for up to 3 days. If they are slightly unripe, put them in a sunny place, where they will ripen further.

Working with Tomatoes

Rinse, dry and trim the stem ends just before using. Depending on the recipe, you can leave the tomatoes whole, halve them, slice them crosswise, cut lengthwise into wedges or chop to the desired-size pieces. To remove seeds for smoother sauces, halve the tomatoes and squeeze each half gently over a bowl.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma Cooking from the Farmers' Market, by Tasha DeSerio & Jodi Liano (Weldon Owen, 2010).

Corn Chowder

Adding the corncobs to the soup while it cooks intensifies the summery flavor of fresh corn.

In a sauté pan over medium heat, cook the bacon, stirring occasionally, until browned and crisp, 4 to 5 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to a paper towel–lined plate.

Pour off all but 1 Tbs. of the drippings in the pan. Add the onion to the pan and cook, stirring occasionally, until translucent, about 3 minutes. Add the corn kernels and cook, stirring with a wooden spoon, for 3 minutes; do not allow the corn to brown. Transfer the corn mixture to a soup pot and add the milk, potatoes and reserved corncobs. Set over medium-low heat and simmer, partially covered, until the potatoes are tender, 30 to 45 minutes.

Remove the corncobs and discard. Using a stick blender, puree the chowder directly in the soup pot to the desired consistency. Alternatively, in a blender or food processor, puree the chowder in batches until smooth. Season with salt and cayenne pepper. Garnish with the chives and chopped bacon and serve immediately. Serves 6 to 8.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma New American Cooking Series, California, by Janet Fletcher (Time-Life Books, 2000).

Avocado, Bacon and Tomato Tartines

With its silken texture and buttery flavor, avocado makes a delicious addition to these open-faced bacon and tomato sandwiches. The bread is spread with aioli, a garlic-flavored mayonnaise that also makes a good sauce for peppers stuffed with rice, tomatoes and corn; or use aioli as a sprightly yet simple dressing for warm white and green bean salad with tuna.

Preheat a broiler.

Arrange the bread in a single layer on a baking sheet and put under the broiler until lightly toasted, 2 to 3 minutes.

Spread the aioli on the bread and top with a few tomato slices, pressing the tomato into the bread. Season with salt and top the tomato with the bacon slices, then with the avocado and a light sprinkle of salt. Serve immediately. Serves 4.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma Cooking from the Farmers' Market, by Tasha DeSerio & Jodi Liano (Weldon Owen, 2010).

Corn Fritters

A wonderful accompaniment to your favorite barbecue dish, these crispy fritters are also delicious paired with fresh tomato and chili salsa (recipe follows). The bite-size fritters are best served hot out of the fry pan, but they are nearly as good at room temperature.

One at a time, hold an ear of corn upright, stem end down, in a shallow dish. Using a sharp knife, slice straight down between the kernels and the cob to remove the kernels, rotating the ear a quarter turn after each cut.

In a large bowl, combine the green onions, flour, baking powder, salt and pepper and stir to mix well. Add the egg, milk and corn kernels and stir just to combine.

In a large fry pan over medium-high heat, warm 2 Tbs. of the oil. When the oil is hot, drop in a heaping tablespoonful of the fritter batter, then press down to flatten.

Repeat to form more fritters, being careful not to crowd the pan. Cook until golden on the first side, about 3 minutes. Turn the fritters over and cook until golden on the second side, about 2 minutes more. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to paper towels to drain. Repeat with the remaining batter, adding more oil to the pan as needed for each batch. Serve warm or at room temperature. Serves 12 to 14.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma Entertaining with the Seasons (Free Press, 2010).

Fresh Tomato and Chili Salsa

In a bowl, stir together the tomatoes, onion, cilantro, chilies and lime juice. Sprinkle with salt and stir again. If the salsa is too dry, add a splash of water.

Cover and let stand for 10 to 15 minutes to allow the flavors to mingle, then serve immediately. Makes 2 cups.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma Savoring Series, Savoring Mexico, by Marilyn Tausend (Time-Life Books, 2000).

Ingredients for Avocado, Bacon and Tomato Tartines

4 slices coarse country bread, each ½ inch thick

½ cup aioli

2 tomatoes, cut into slices ¼ inch thick

Salt, to taste

8 thin bacon slices, cooked until crispy

1 avocado, peeled, pitted and thinly sliced

Ingredients for Corn Fritters

3 ears of corn, husks and silks removed

10 green onions, both white and light green portions, minced

1 cup all-purpose flour

1½ tsp. baking powder

1 tsp. salt

1 tsp. freshly ground pepper

1 egg, lightly beaten

⅔ cup milk

About 6 Tbs. canola, grape seed or sunflower oil

Ingredients for Fresh Tomato and Chili Salsa

1 lb. ripe tomatoes, cut into ¼-inch pieces

⅓ cup finely chopped white onion

¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

2 serrano chilies, finely chopped

2 tsp. fresh lime juice

Sea salt, to taste