



## Spotted Bruschetta Buffet with Freckle Juice

By Erin Fletter

**Prep Time** 25 / **Cook Time** 7 / **Serves** 4 - 6

### Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

**marinate:** to soak food in a seasoned liquid to add flavor and tenderize it before cooking.

**mash:** to reduce food, like potatoes or bananas, to a soft, pulpy state by beating or pressure.

**seal:** to close tightly, keeping filling inside.

**shake:** to rapidly and vigorously move a covered container filled with food up and down and side to side to combine ingredients and create a different consistency, such as shaking whipped cream to make butter.

**toast:** to brown and crisp food in a heated skillet or oven, or in a toaster.

### Equipment

- Oven
- Sheet pan or cookie sheet
- Oven mitts or potholders
- Medium mixing bowl
- Bowls for holding toppings
- Liquid measuring cup
- Measuring spoons
- Dry measuring cups
- Cutting board + kid-safe knife
- Jar or container with tight lid for mixing vinaigrette
- Wooden spoon

- Fork to mash avocado

## Ingredients

### Spotted Bruschetta Buffet with Freckle Juice

- 1 sliced baguette, sliced Italian or French bread loaf, or 6 slices whole wheat or sourdough bread **\*\* (for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free/nut-free bread slices)\*\***
- 2 T butter, softened, to toast bread **\*\* (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub olive oil)\*\***
- Freckle Juice (vinaigrette):
  - 1/4 C red wine vinegar, balsamic, or apple cider vinegar
  - 2 tsp sugar
  - 1/2 tsp garlic powder
  - 1/4 tsp salt
  - 1 pinch ground black pepper
  - 1/2 C olive oil
- Savory Toppings:
  - 1/2 lb cherry tomatoes
  - 1 2.25-oz can sliced black olives
  - 4 to 5 slices mozzarella, white cheddar, or muenster cheese
  - 2 ripe avocados
  - 1/2 C shredded carrots
- Sweet Toppings:
  - 1 ripe banana
  - 1/4 C honey/maple syrup (for drizzling over sweet bruschetta combinations)
  - 5 oz ricotta or whipped cream cheese **\*\* (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free ricotta cheese OR puréed soft silken tofu—more info below)\*\***
  - 1 apple or ripe pear
  - 1/2 C chocolate chips or chunks **\*\* (Omit for CHOCOLATE ALLERGY or sub carob chips, and for DAIRY/NUT/SOY ALLERGY sub Enjoy Life brand chocolate chips)\*\***
  - 1/2 C dried fruit (pitted dates/raisins/dried cranberries)

# Food Allergen Substitutions

## Spotted Bruschetta Buffet with Freckle Juice

**Gluten/Wheat:** Substitute gluten-free/nut-free bread slices for sliced bread in Bruschetta.

**Dairy:** Substitute olive oil for butter to brush on bread slices before toasting Bruschetta. Substitute dairy-free/nut-free mozzarella or other cheese slices, like Daiya brand. For 5 oz ricotta or whipped cream cheese, substitute dairy-free/nut-free ricotta cheese OR puréed soft silken tofu mixed with 1 T nutritional yeast + 1 pinch salt. Use Enjoy Life brand chocolate chips.

**Chocolate:** Omit chocolate chips or substitute carob chips.

**Nut:** Use Enjoy Life brand chocolate chips.

**Soy:** Use Enjoy Life brand chocolate chips.

## Instructions

### Spotted Bruschetta Buffet with Freckle Juice

#### preheat + cut + toast

Preheat the oven to 425 F. Arrange slices of **1 baguette** on your sheet pan. (Traditional baguettes are narrow; if using a larger loaf of sliced bread, kids can cut each slice of bread diagonally in half.) Spread the **2 tablespoons of softened butter** onto both sides of the slices. (If using olive oil, lightly brush it on both sides.) Once the oven preheats, adults can slide sheet pan into the oven. Set a time for 7 minutes to toast the bread.

#### vinaigrette

Make the Freckle Juice vinaigrette. (If you're also making the Secret Chef Salad (see recipe) as part of a meal plan, you can make the vinaigrette for both recipes at the same time.)

#### measure + shake + taste

To a jar or container with a tight lid, measure and add **1/4 cup red wine vinegar, 2 teaspoons sugar, 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and 1 pinch of black pepper**. Seal the lid and shake to combine the ingredients, and then add **\*1/2 cup olive oil\*\*** and shake again. Add more salt, vinegar, or garlic powder to taste. This vinaigrette will be tossed with your tomatoes for the Bruschetta.

#### chop + marinate

Chop **1/2 pound cherry tomatoes** into small pieces and add to a mixing bowl. Marinate the chopped tomatoes with a few spoonfuls of the Freckle Juice vinaigrette.

#### cut + scoop + mash

Use a butter knife to cut **2 avocados** around the pits. Twist the avocado halves and pull apart! Squeeze out the pit and scoop the avocado flesh into a bowl. Use a fork to mash up the flesh!

### cut + slice + chop

Cut **4 to 5 slices of mozzarella** or other cheese into strips or other shapes. Slice **1 banana**. Chop **1 apple or pear** into bite-sized pieces and **1/2 cup dried fruit** into small pieces (raisins and cranberries are fine whole).

### other toppings

To separate bowls, add **1 can sliced black olives**, **1/2 C shredded carrots**, **5 oz ricotta**, **1/2 C chocolate chips**, and **1/4 C honey**. Keep each topping separate!

### assemble + melt

Now kid chefs can assemble their bruschetta! Encourage them to make sweet bruschetta and savory bruschetta using different combinations of ingredients, and to use their imaginations to create their own designs! To melt the cheese and chocolate, place the assembled bruschetta in a preheated oven for a couple of minutes until melted. Buon appetito!

## Featured Ingredient: Tomato!

Hi! I'm Tomato!

"I'm a beautiful, juicy red Tomato. Do you pronounce my name: "tuh-may-tow" or "tuh-mah-tow?" Either way you slice it (or say it), we tomatoes are wonderfully adaptable. You'll find us fresh or cooked on sandwiches, in salads, tacos, soups, stews, sauces, and much more."

### History & Etymology

The tomatoes we have now descended from the pea-size fruit of wild plants that grew in western South America. Mesoamericans were the first to domesticate the tomato plant sometime before 500 BCE.

Hernán Cortés, a Spanish conquistador, may have brought tomatoes back to Europe in the 16th century after conquering the Aztec city, Tenochtitlan (now Mexico City).

Tomatoes cultivated in North American colonies in the early 1700s may have been introduced from the Caribbean. Thomas Jefferson also brought tomato seeds back from France. Before tomatoes were used in cooking, the plants were used ornamentally due to some people's beliefs that they were poisonous. One reason for this error was that tomatoes come from the nightshade family, including the belladonna plant (or deadly nightshade), which has highly toxic leaves and berries. Another reason may be that the pewter plates they used back then adversely reacted to the acid in tomato juice.

China is by far the largest producer of tomatoes in the world. In the United States, California and Florida produce the most tomatoes.

The American and British pronunciations of "tomato" were made famous by an Ira and George Gershwin song from 1937 called "Let's Call the Whole Thing Off." Americans pronounce the word "tuh-may-tow," and the British say "tuh-mah-tow."

The word "tomato" comes from the Spanish, French, or Portuguese "tomate," from the Nahuatl "tomatl."

## Anatomy

The tomato is a berry from the tomato plant (*Solanum Lycopersicum*), a perennial vine. It is part of the Solanaceae family, like the potato, pepper, eggplant, and petunia. Since it is a berry, it is a fruit, although mainly used as a vegetable.

A tomato's color is usually red but can also be yellow, orange, green, or purple. Tomatoes can be spherical, oval, or pear-shaped. Their flesh is pulpy with cavities, called locules, that hold the seeds.

There are more than 10,000 tomato varieties. Some are hybrids, and some are heirlooms. An heirloom tomato is a variety that has been grown for generations on a family farm rather than commercially.

Unfortunately, in the past 40 years, many heirloom varieties have been lost, along with the smaller family farms that grew them. However, hundreds of heirloom tomato varieties are still available.

## How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

If you are growing your own tomatoes, pick them from the vine while still firm, with a slight give, and before their ripe color (usually red) deepens too much. While holding the fruit, twist it off the stem until it snaps off. The leaf on top of the tomato (the calyx) and part of the stem will come with it. You can also snip it off using garden scissors.

When you choose tomatoes at the store, pick fruit that has smooth, brightly colored skin with no cracks or bruises, is firm but gives with slight pressure, is heavy for its size, and has a pleasant, aromatic smell.

Avoid tomatoes with pale or dark spots.

Store tomatoes at room temperature, as their flavor will decrease in a refrigerator's cold temperature. Wait to wash them until you are ready to use them.

If you plan to make a tomato sauce or soup using fresh, raw tomatoes, you will want to peel them first.

This can be difficult without some preparation: First, put a pot of water on the stove to boil and fill a large bowl with cold or icy water. Next, after washing the tomatoes, use your knife to cut a shallow 'X' through the skin at the top or bottom of each one. Then use a slotted spoon to place the tomatoes into the boiling water until the skin begins to loosen and peel back at the incision, about 30 to 60 seconds. Finally, immediately dunk them into the ice water. The skin should peel easily now. You can also remove the seeds by cutting the peeled tomatoes in half and scooping the seeds out with a spoon.

Tomatoes are versatile vegetables for cooking. Ripe tomatoes can be prepared fresh, stuffed, baked, boiled, or stewed, and they are the base for many sauces. You can also pickle green, unripe tomatoes, add them to salsa or bread and fry them.

## Nutrition

Tomatoes are a moderate source of vitamin C, and cooked tomatoes are high in lycopene, an antioxidant, which may help protect your body's cells from damage, strengthen your immune system, and prevent some diseases.