



DIAMOND CLUB

TOMATO SALAD 'MAMAN BLANC'

Summer is the perfect season to take advantage of good-quality produce and let it speak for itself. One of my most vivid childhood food memories is the wonderful sight and smell of huge, misshapen tomatoes lined up on the kitchen windowsill. Another is of savouring the juices they formed as they marinated for this salad... and all the kids fighting over who would be first to dip a wedge of crusty bread into them.

This recipe is very simple to prepare, but you do need to use the right tomatoes. Here I have sourced some of the very best varieties from the wonderful growers at the Tomato Stall on the Isle of Wight, but of course local farm shops should have wonderful varieties as well.

WATCH THE VIDEO

SERVES

4-6

PREPARATION

15 mins, plus 1 hour marinating

FOR THE TOMATOES

- 800g tomatoes (* 1), de-stemmed and cored
- 1 sprig basil leaves, picked and torn or roughly chopped
- 1 sprig marjoram leaves, picked and torn or roughly chopped
- 1 banana shallot, peeled and finely sliced
- 4 pinches sea salt
- 2 pinches freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE DRESSING

- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 2 tbsp warm water
- 4 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 2 pinches freshly ground black pepper

TO SERVE (OPTIONAL)

- 1 buffalo mozzarella, cut into wedges
(recommend Laverstoke Park Farm mozzarella)

METHOD

For the tomatoes

- Cut the tomatoes into slices and quarters depending on how big they are and how firm the flesh is.
- Place into a large bowl and mix together with the basil, marjoram, shallot, salt and pepper.
- Set to one side to allow the salt to draw out the moisture of the tomatoes and create a delicious tomato jus in the bottom of the bowl.

For the dressing

- In a large bowl, mix together the Dijon mustard, red wine vinegar and 1 tbsp of warm water. Add the oil slowly, whisking continuously, then whisk in the remaining water to emulsify and thin the dressing.

- Season with salt and pepper (*2)

To serve

- Spoon the dressing over the tomatoes and leave to marinate for up to an hour at room temperature (*3). If necessary, you can serve it straight away. Scatter over the mozzarella to serve.

Variation

- Make double the quantity of dressing and use half of it to dress a small head of hearty lettuce, such as Little Gem, Batavia, Romaine or Escarole, to serve alongside the tomatoes.

Chefs notes ():*

*1 The success of this salad will depend on the ripeness and quality of the tomatoes.

Visit the tomato stall to find some of the very best varieties:

www.thetomatostall.co.uk

*2 Alternatively you can make the dressing by shaking all the ingredients together to combine in a small jar with the lid on.

*3 A little miracle occurs during this hour. The salt will season and also lightly cure the tomatoes, creating a pool of wonderful jus at the bottom of the dish.

Raymond Blanc

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