

Poached Eggs atop Ciabatta

with Italian Salsa of Pancetta, Tomatoes, & Shallots

This recipe is featured in my third Antonio Cortese Mystery novel, *Death in Abundance*. It is simple but so delicious, perfect for breakfast or a stylish brunch. You can either take a loaf of ciabatta bread and cut it into servable size pieces, or buy sandwich size ciabatta rolls.

Ingredients:

Italian Salsa (enough for 4 servings):

2 ounces pancetta--chopped
two Roma tomatoes-diced fairly small
one small shallot--finely minced
1/4 cup Italian parsley--chopped
a splash of Extra virgin olive oil
salt and pepper

Other Ingredients:

2 eggs per person
two halves of a ciabatta roll per person--
sliced and served open-faced
olive oil or melted butter (to brush on
ciabatta)
Pecorino Romano--shaved with a
vegetable peeler (optional)

Procedure:

1. Chop your pancetta (or bacon or prosciutto--see Frankie's Tips below) and brown in a skillet. Drain on a paper towel and set aside to cool.
2. Prepare Italian Salsa. Set aside.
3. Pre-heat broiler. Brush cut side of ciabatta bread with olive oil or melted butter.
4. Choose a skillet with a lid for poaching. Your best bet is to go with a 10 to 12-inch nonstick skillet. Fill the skillet with 2 inches of water. Bring the water to a boil.
5. While water is heating, toast your ciabatta under the broiler. Set aside.
6. Add a little bit of vinegar to the water to help the whites set quickly. Apple cider, or white wine vinegar are good choices because they won't color the eggs.
7. Crack the eggs into a ramekin or small glass bowl. You only want to use it if the yolk is not broken.
8. Reduce water to a simmer and slide the eggs gently into the water. Cook about 3 minutes for runny yolk, or up to 5 minutes for a firm yolk.
9. Remove the eggs with a slotted spoon. Gently dry tops with a paper or cloth towel. Place atop toasted ciabatta. Garnish with Italian Salsa, and shaved Pecorino cheese if you so desire.



Frankie's Tips:

- ◆ You can buy pancetta by the slice at most deli counters, or you can buy it already diced at Trader Joe's. Feel free to substitute bacon or prosciutto.
- ◆ I realized after my photographs that I forgot to add the Pecorino Romano which is optional. If you add it, shaving it with a vegetable peeler makes a gorgeous presentation.