

## Recipe for Olive Panzanella

Panzanella is a classic Italian bread salad. Make sure to use a good, hard loaf rather than something that will dissolve into a pitiful mush once it makes contact with the vinaigrette. Pairing the bread with summer produce -- tomatoes, fresh corn, cucumbers -- yields a fresh, bright salad that contrasts beautifully with all the briny olives. Get out your biggest bowl.

Serves 6

For the salad:

4 ears corn  
1/2 pound green beans, trimmed  
2 cucumbers, halved lengthwise, seeded, peeled (if desired), and sliced into half-moons, or 1 English cucumber (unpeeled, unseeded, but still sliced)  
3 medium-size summer tomatoes, a mix of yellow and red preferred  
1 small red onion, diced  
1/2 cup pitted kalamata olives, halved  
1/2 cup pine nuts, toasted

For the vinaigrette:

1/4 cup olives  
1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons olive oil  
1/4 cup red wine vinegar  
1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard  
salt and pepper, to taste

To finish:

1 loaf olive bread, torn into rough, slightly-larger-than bite-size pieces  
15 fresh basil leaves

Bring a small pot of lightly salted water to a boil. You'll use this in a minute for the green beans.

Place the corn in a microwave-safe dish. Keep it in its husks, and don't touch the silks. Most microwaves have a button allowing you to disable the turntable, so go ahead and push it. Cook corn, uncovered, on full power for 5 minutes. Carefully turn the dish around, and flip each ear of corn over as well. Microwave an additional 5 minutes or until done. (Press a fingernail into a kernel to test. Be VERY careful when peeling back the husks because the corn will be extremely hot.) Lay ears on a rack to begin cooling.

(If you want to boil the corn instead, feel free. Just use a large pot in step one instead of a small.)

Blanch the green beans for two minutes, drain, then plunge in ice water. Drain again and pat dry. Cut in half, and place in the serving bowl. Add the cucumbers, tomatoes, red onions, 1/2 cup of olives, and pine nuts.

Very carefully peel off the corn husks and remove the silks. (They come off easily.) Rinse the cobs under cold water if they're still too hot to handle. Once cool, use a sharp knife to cut the kernels from the cob directly over the salad bowl.

Combine all the vinaigrette ingredients in a small mini-chop or blender. Process until emulsified and the olives break down fully and incorporate. Pour into salad and toss well with tongs.

Toss in the bread and basil, give a final stir, and serve.