Lemon–Basil Caprese Salami Cups

Crisp salami, cool mozzarella, lemony greens and toasted oregano crumbs.



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INGREDIENTS

24 pliable slices ready-to-eat Genoa salami, about 3 inches wide; not paper-thin; remove inedible casing

6 oz fresh pasteurized-milk mozzarella, drained and dried; cut into 24 pieces

12 small cherry tomatoes, quartered: 48 wedges; drain and blot dry

1 packed cup arugula (about 1 oz), washed and thoroughly dried

2 tbsp sliced fresh basil, washed and dried: 1 tbsp filling; 1 tbsp finish

1 tsp lemon zest: 1/2 tsp dressing; 1/2 tsp finish; plus 1 tsp lemon juice

2 tsp olive oil: 1 tsp crumbs; 1 tsp dressing

3 tbsp panko breadcrumbs

1/2 tsp dried oregano

1/4 tsp ground black pepper

1 tbsp prepared balsamic glaze

YOU'LL NEED

24-well mini muffin pan; rimmed sheet; tongs; mitts; paper towels; rack; sieve; skillet; bowls; knife; measuring spoons; thermometer for reheating.

HIGHER-RISK GUESTS

Pregnant, 65+, or immunocompromised? Do not serve this cooled-salami version. CDC recommends deli meats and dry/fermented sausages heated to 165°F or steaming hot; choose a hot alternative served promptly. Pasteurized mozzarella does not make every soft cheese or cooled salami safe.

Contains milk and wheat; check labels. No extra salt. Lemon and glaze do not sanitize food or make it shelf-stable.

METHOD

1 · Keep filling dry and cold. Heat oven to 375°F. Wash hands; use clean tools. Rinse tomatoes, herbs, greens, and lemon under running water; dry thoroughly. Prewashed ready-to-eat greens need no rewashing. Drain and blot cheese and quartered tomatoes; do not salt. Keep filling at 40°F or below until assembly.

2 · Crisp, blot, cool. Set the dry mini pan on a rimmed sheet. Pleat 1 salami slice into each well; no oil. Bake 8–10 min, checking at 7, until rims are firm and browned, not black. Stand 1 min; lift with tongs and mitts onto paper towels. Blot inside and out. Never touch or pour hot pan fat. Cool empty shells on a rack about 10 min total, including the settling minute, until no longer warm.

3 · Toast crumbs. Heat 1 tsp oil in a skillet over medium-low. Stir in all panko and oregano; toast 2–3 min, stirring, until light golden. Remove from heat and spread on a plate to cool. Keep dry until serving.

4 · Dress lightly. Mix remaining 1 tsp oil, 1 tsp lemon juice, 1/2 tsp zest, and all pepper. Just before serving, toss with dried arugula, drained tomatoes, and 1 tbsp basil. Leave any liquid in the bowl; never pour it into the shells.

5 · Assemble now. Divide dressed greens among 24 fully cooled shells. Add 1 cheese piece and 2 tomato wedges to each. Divide all crumbs, remaining 1 tbsp basil, and remaining 1/2 tsp zest over cups. Divide all glaze, about 1/8 tsp per cup. Serve immediately in small batches; keep unserved filling chilled. Warm shells, wet filling, or early glazing soften the cups.

6 · Store safely. Refrigerate promptly in shallow covered containers at 40°F or below within 2 hours total prep/serving time (1 hour above 90°F); discard if out longer. Use within 3–4 days, sooner per labels. Reheat leftovers at 350°F until centers reach 165°F; tent if rims darken. Cheese melts, greens wilt, and shells soften. For advance prep, chill filling, dressing, and salami separately; keep crumbs dry. Bake and assemble close to serving.

Inspiration: Cookingoat, "Salami Cups" (caption and thumbnail).

Safety: USDA FSIS, Food Safety Basics · CDC, Preventing Listeria · FDA, Produce Safety

RECIPE NOTE

Not kitchen-tested; quantities, yield and times are estimates. AI-generated serving illustration.

Sources: [1] facebook.com · [2] fsis.usda.gov · [3] cdc.gov · [4] fda.gov