

The Sandwich (makes 4, very large)

- Approx 3 lbs. red/ripe only height of the season preferably home grown tomatoes, thickly sliced
- 8 large slices of bread (we use Trader Joe's Cracked Wheat Sourdough, just the large ones in the middle of the bag)
- 4-8oz good quality pancetta sliced about 1/8" thick (NOT as thin as delis slice prosciutto, more like bacon.)
- Of course if you like yours thick, go for it. We used 6 oz last night.)
- garlic cloves, or even garlic powder.
- Several handfuls of arugula
- Olive oil
- Salt
- Lemon Garlic Mayo (below)

Spray or drizzle olive oil (preferably extra virgin, but don't kill yourself if it isn't) over the tomatoes then sprinkle salt and pepper to taste over them. Do it at least 10 minutes before eating. We tend to do it an hour before.

Bake the pancetta in a 425 degree oven until it is crisp but not burnt. Put the pancetta between paper towels to remove a lot of the grease. We often do this earlier in the day then take the cooled pancetta in the paper towels and just shove it in the fridge till we need it (though we reheat it slightly in the microwave just before assembly).

Heat a stove top grill pan. While heating spray or brush both sides of the bread with olive oil. Or, rub both sides of the bread with butter (we find that works out really well if the bread is frozen which is usually where ours is found). Again, if the bread is frozen, it is really easy to rub clove(s) of garlic on both sides. The garlic just wears away onto the bread (great for garlic bread as well). In a pinch we've found that garlic powder isn't all that bad, though the flavor isn't the same. Use sparingly.

Grill the bread on the grill pan. If you don't have one, toast the bread in the oven (using broiler or not). Or be creative and toast the bread in a toaster, then do the oil/butter/garlic thing. Hey, this is a sandwich! It will taste good. Our pan hold 4 pieces at a time which is good. We do the first 4 and start assembly while toasting the rest of them.

Put equal amounts of the mayo spread on four slices of bread. Top with equal amounts of pancetta, then equal amounts of tomato, then equal amounts of arugula. Spray or drizzle some olive oil over the arugula, then sprinkle salt over it (preferably kosher or sea salt).

Here's how we always describe the tomato step: Cram as many slices of the ripe tomatoes as you possibly can (knowing you have to pick it up) on top of what you've done so far.

After you have oiled and salted the arugula, cover each sandwich with the remaining slices of bread. Typically we press down some and serve.

Sometimes we have hot peppers on the side.

Lemon Garlic Mayo

- 4 largish TB mayo (we often use Light Mayo and found we like the stuff from Vons).
- 2 cloves of garlic peeled and smashed/diced/chopped
- pulp of a lemon (seeded) that weighs about 4oz (you don't have to be exact!)
- rind of that lemon (see the stuff amount how to grate a lemon above)
- dash of tabasco or other hot sauce of your choice, very optional
- small dash of nam pla (aka fish sauce), very optional
- fresh ground black pepper to taste
- fresh lemon juice plus 1 tsp of optional white wine vinegar

Put all the ingredients except the lemon juice (and vinegar, if using) into a mini food processor. Whir away. Add in the juice/vinegar. How much? We want the flavor but we don't want to turn it into a really loose sauce. Use however much you like to get the consistency you like. At the very most, you don't want it to be so runny that it won't stay on the bread when you pick it up.

If you don't have a mini food processor and you have a mortar and pestle you could mix it all up there. If you don't have that, just chop up the pulp and the rind as well as you can and mix with the other ingredients. It will be fine.

Best Bloody Mary Ever

This recipe is for 2 drinks because that's what we do.

- 8 oz. Tomato Juice (but see above, 2 oz. tomato paste + water to make 8 oz.)
- 3 (or 4 if you like) ounces of Vodka. Also see above.
- 1/2 ounce fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 ounce fresh lime juice
- 1/2 ounce Worcestershire Sauce
- 1 tsp prepared horseradish
- 1/2 tsp Cholula Hot Sauce
- 1/2 tsp Smoked Paprika (or a little more if you don't taste it, but don't over do it)
- 1/2 tsp Celery Salt (more or less to taste)
- salt and fresh ground pepper to taste

Garnishes: we like a single pepper which depends on what we have around. Some people like celery and a bunch of other stuff.

In a large container (we use a 4 cup measuring cup) mix all the ingredients except the garnishes. Add ice cubes. We use about 6-8. Stir the mixture. Pour into chilled rocks glasses (if you have such a thing, otherwise any glass or cup or container is going to do... it's a drink!)