

## Mediterranean Ciabatta Sandwich

### Ingredients:

1 loaf of Italian Ciabatta bread  
1 handful of fresh basil leaves  
3 or 4 ounces of black olive pate or tapenade (buy or see below)  
6 - 8 ounces of sliced fresh mozzarella  
2-3 vine ripened tomatoes  
Extra Virgin Olive Oil  
Salt and Pepper



Steam the basil leaves adding a little olive oil and a pinch of salt. Mince to a paste in food processor. Cut the bread lengthwise removing some of the soft inside bread. Brush generously the inside part of the Ciabatta with olive oil. Spread the olive pate' on the lower part of the bread and the basil paste on the upper part. Lay the mozzarella and tomato slices and season with salt and pepper. Wrap well with aluminum foil. Refrigerate for several hours to fuse the flavors. Bring to the beach, picnic, game, pool, or serve in your backyard on a wooden cutting board slicing into hand friendly sizes. Enjoy!

*Variations - try adding other ingredients such as roasted red peppers, grilled portabella mushroom, grilled eggplant, zucchini or onions. Use goat cheese instead of mozzarella. Add salami and or prosciutto - whatever sounds good to you! - Buon Appetito!*

## Olive Pate (Tapenade)

12 oz. Calamata olives, or half Calamata and half cracked green olives, (about 1-1/2 cups before pitting), pits removed  
1/2 cup capers  
2 tbsp. onion  
3 tbsp. olive oil  
2+ tbsp. lemon juice  
1/2 tsp. dried thyme

In separate bowls, soak the olives and capers in cold water for 15 minutes to remove excess salt, then drain and rinse well, pressing down on the capers to extract as much water and brine as possible. Remove the pits from the olives by smashing them with your thumb on a cutting board. Put all of the ingredients into a blender or food processor, and puree until you have a fairly smooth paste. Makes about 1-1/2 cups, and keeps indefinitely in the refrigerator.

This recipe came in from Mauro and Tzeela at Cooking in Toscana.

[www.cookingintoscana.it](http://www.cookingintoscana.it)

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