



Rustic Rosemary Olive Oil Croutons

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 10 / **Cook Time** 10 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

drizzle: to trickle a thin stream of a liquid ingredient, like icing or sauce, over food.

tear: to pull or rip apart a food, like basil leaves, into pieces instead of cutting with a knife; cutting breaks cell walls more, so herbs can discolor faster.

toast: to brown and crisp food in a heated skillet or oven, or in a toaster.

Equipment

- Skillet
- Medium mixing bowl
- Measuring spoons

Ingredients

Rustic Rosemary Olive Oil Croutons

- 1 to 2 fresh rosemary sprigs
- 2 slices sourdough or whole wheat bread **** (for GLUTEN ALLERGY use gluten-free/nut-free bread) ****
- 3 T olive oil
- 1 garlic clove
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp ground black pepper
- 1 to 2 tsp orange zest from 1 orange, optional

Food Allergen Substitutions

Rustic Rosemary Olive Oil Croutons

Gluten/Wheat: Use gluten-free/nut-free bread.

Instructions

Rustic Rosemary Olive Oil Croutons

pinch + tear

Pinch the leaves from **1 to 2 rosemary sprigs**. Discard the stems and pinch the leaves into tiny bits. Tear **2 slices of bread** into rustic 1" pieces. Add bread to a mixing bowl.

drizzle + toss + toast

Drizzle **3 tablespoons of olive oil** over the bread. Add **1 garlic clove, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/4 teaspoon black pepper**, and **1 to 2 teaspoons orange zest** if using. Next, add the bits of rosemary leaves. Toss the bread until it's evenly coated. Then heat a skillet and toast the bread until it's crispy and golden brown. Discard the garlic clove, then top salads or soups, like Italian Zucchini "Ribollita" Bread Soup (see recipe) with a few croutons, and enjoy!

Featured Ingredient: Rosemary!

Hi! I'm Rosemary!

"I'm a fragrant herb with needle-like leaves. I can have blue, pink, purple, or white flowers in the spring and I'm very pretty in gardens. I'm also easy to grow, and garden pests don't care for me too much. My leaves add wonderful flavor to your recipes! You can use them dried or fresh, in breads, roast vegetables or meats, soups, and more, and I taste great in drinks like lemonade. Once you've met me, you'll definitely recognize me from then on!"

History

Rosemary is an herb commonly used to flavor foods.

The Romans brought rosemary to England in the eighth century. This herb originally came from the Mediterranean region—the sea cliffs of Italy, France, Greece, and Spain. Ancient Greeks and Romans used rosemary for medicine and cooking!

The ancient Greeks believed that rosemary was a magical plant that could improve their memory!

Rosemary was a token of love and loyalty. During the English Tudor era, rosemary represented fidelity, and brides would traditionally give sprigs of it to the bridegroom. In some places, rosemary sprigs are still used in the wedding ceremony or reception.

In the 16th century, rosemary was often burned in hospitals as a disinfectant to kill germs.

Anatomy & Etymology

Rosemary is part of the mint family, which includes basil, lavender, oregano, and many other herbs.

Rosemary looks like a tree you've probably seen before! What does it look like? Smell like? Feel like? An evergreen? Rosemary IS an evergreen shrub!

A rosemary plant can easily grow to five feet tall!

Rosemary leaves are the edible part of the plant!

The word "rosemary" came from the Latin word "ros marinus," meaning "mist or dew of the sea."

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

A rosemary plant will grow year after year once it's planted. It can grow in the wild, in the garden, or indoors!

Rosemary can be used fresh or dried. It adds a woody, herbal flavor to foods.

Rosemary is best when cooked a little before eating it, while other herbs are better when fresh. You can add rosemary to eggs, salad dressings, cakes, drinks, soups, stews, muffins, and other baked goods.

Nutrition

In ancient times, people used rosemary as an herbal medicine for stomach aches, toothaches, headaches, and even to prevent balding!

Rosemary was also sometimes known as the "herb of memory." The leaves were supposed to quicken the mind and prevent forgetfulness. Students would wear sprigs of rosemary in their hair while taking exams!

Recent studies find that rosemary may offer a slight improvement in memory.

Rosemary does not have a ton of vitamins and minerals compared to vegetables, meat, and fruit, BUT it adds so much flavor and aroma to dishes that it's worth adding.