**PANZANELLA SALAD**

**Ingredients**

* 1 loaf of bread, cut or torn into 2.5cm/1” rough pieces
* 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
* 8 medium tomatoes
* 2 tsp salt (or 3/4 tsp table salt)
* 4 small or 2 large cucumbers.  If the garden variety, peel and deseed.
* 2 cup basil leaves, loosely packed

**Dressing:**

* 4 tbsp **red or white** wine vinegar
* 2 tsp Dijon mustard
* 16 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, best quality
* 3 tsp garlic, finely minced (1 large or 2 small)
* ½ tsp salt

**Instructions**

**Toast bread:**

* **Preheat** oven to 180°C /350°F (160°C fan).
* **Toss** bread chunks with 1 tbsp olive oil in a bowl.
* **Toast:**Spread bread on a tray and toast for about 15 minutes, until the outside is becoming golden and crunchy but the inside is still a little soft, like toast. Remove and leave to cool.

**Salad:**

* **Cut tomato** into 8 wedges each. Cut some of these wedges into half (I like irregular shapes for this rustic salad).
* **Sweat tomato with salt:** Season the tomatoes with salt, toss and set aside for 10 minutes to draw out the juices. Reserve the juice for the dressing
* **Cut cucumber** into any shaped chunks around 2.5cm / 1" pieces. Again, I like to do irregular but even-sized shapes.
* **Toss veg:** Add cucumber and basil, tomato into large bowl, toss gently.
* **Tomato Dressing:** Add Dressing ingredients into bowl holding the tomato juice, whisk well.
* **Dress salad:** Add bread to salad, pour over dressing. Give it a light toss.
* **Rest then serve:** Leave for 5 minutes to let the juices soak into the bread, tossing once or twice. Toss once more just before serving!