

CRISPY BAKED TOMATOES

Pomodori Croccanti al Forno



These can be served warm or at room temperature, either as a side dish or as part of an anti-pasto buffet. When cold, they are marvelous cut and tossed in green salads, because baking brings out the true summer-tomato taste. Roughly chopped, they make a great topping for a bruschetta.

Serves 6

- 6 large plum tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 cup panko bread crumbs
- ½ cup grated Grana Padano
- ½ cup finely chopped scallions
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh Italian parsley
- ¾ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Halve the tomatoes crosswise, and cut out the cores. Squeeze out the seeds. In a large bowl, toss the tomatoes with the olive oil and 1 teaspoon of the salt.

In a medium bowl, toss together the panko, grated cheese, scallions, parsley, red pepper flakes, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Press the stuffing into the tomatoes, opening the tomatoes up with your fingers as you go to get some stuffing into the smaller cavities.

Set the tomatoes, cut side up, on a parchment-lined rimmed sheet pan. Drizzle the tops with olive oil. Bake on the top rack of the oven until the tomatoes are tender but still hold their shape and the stuffing is browned, about 20 to 25 minutes.

Move the tomatoes to the bottom rack, and bake to dry them out a bit, about 10 to 15 minutes more.