

Courtesy of Pendolino

STARTERS & SIDES Pendolino

Pendolino's grilled broccolini and stracciatella bruschetta with raisin-caper vinaigrette

By Sarra Sedghi · Rough Draft Atlanta, 6/11/2025

Serves 4 to 6 people

Ingredients

RAISIN-CAPER VINAIGRETTE

- [ ] 1/2 cup golden raisins
- [ ] 1/2 cup capers, rough chopped
- [ ] 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- [ ] 1/4 cup water
- [ ] 1/4 cup honey
- [ ] 1/2 cup olive oil
- [ ] 1 tsp. Sicilian oregano
- [ ] 1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
- [ ] Zest and juice of 1 lemon

BRUSCHETTA

- [ ] 4 slices country-style Italian or French loaf, cut 3/4 inches thick (can also use a baguette, ciabatta, or focaccia)

Directions

1. Make the vinaigrette: Mix vinegar, water, and honey in a small saucepan and bring to a simmer. Pour hot mixture over raisins. Let cool to room temperature, about 15-20 minutes.
2. Once cool, add capers, olive oil, oregano, and pepper. Fold in lemon zest and juice. Reserve at room temperature.
3. Prepare the broccolini: Wash broccolini and toss with olive oil and sea salt. Place on medium hot grill and cook until charred and wilted, 3-4 minutes on each side.
4. Remove the broccolini from the grill and let it cool. Chop into two-inch pieces and reserve.
5. Prepare the bread: Drizzle each slice of bread with 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Prepare a medium hardwood or charcoal grill.
6. Place bread on medium-hot grill and cook until golden and toasty, about 1-2 minutes per side. Remove the bread from the grill and let cool. Cut garlic clove in half and rub cut half into the toasted bread.

- [ ] 4 tbsp. olive oil, separated
- [ ] 8-12 garlic cloves (2-3 per slice)
- [ ] 8 oz stracciatella cheese

BROCCOLINI

- [ ] 1 bunch broccolini
- [ ] 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- [ ] 1 tsp. sea salt

ASSEMBLY

1. Top each piece of bruschetta with 2 ounces of stracciatella cheese.
2. Next, add chopped broccolini and a generous spoonful of caper-raisin vinaigrette.

The story

This week, we're sharing Pendolino's recipe for grilled broccolini and stracciatella bruschetta dressed in a raisin-caper vinaigrette, a crowd-pleasing appetizer made with seasonal vegetables and staple Italian ingredients you likely already have in your pantry.

Chef and owner Kevin Maxey said that Pendolino makes focaccia daily, usually toasting it in the Chastain Park restaurant's wood-burning pizza oven with a little olive oil.

Bruschetta comes from the Italian word *bruscare,* which means "to toast or burn." Pendolino always features some form of grilled or toasted bread rubbed with fresh garlic, olive oil, and salt. Toppings may include cheese, vegetables, or sauce. In the spring and early summer, people can expect roasted asparagus, fava beans, or broccolini, which Maxey finds ideal bruschetta toppings.

Pendolino also offers a burrata dish. "Stracciatella" refers to the stringy interior of buratta. "The garnish is always changing," he said. "Currently, we're doing it with lightly pickled Georgia strawberries, toasted almonds, and some nice arugula. It's very satisfying spooning the cool, creamy cheese onto the warm bread."

Maxey said the easiest place to source stracciatella is the Murray's Cheese Shop section in Kroger. If you can't find it there, burrata or whole milk ricotta (get The Alden's ricotta recipe here) make great substitutes. As for aromatics, Maxey likes the selection of herbs and spices found at Buford Highway Farmers Market.

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