

Cherry Peppers Stuffed with Mozzarella and Basil

I love the sweet and hot flavor of pickled cherry peppers, ideal for preparing quick and tasty appetizers. You can find them in the deli case of most grocery stores or in a specialty Italian deli. They are great to have on hand to enliven salads, sliced into steamed broccoli and cauliflower or to tuck into a hearty sandwich.

Serves 6

Ingredients

- 1 cup grated Part-skim mozzarella
- 1 tablespoon olive oil, divided
- 3 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped, divided
- 1/2 pound pickled cherry peppers, drained
- 1/4 cup whole wheat breadcrumbs
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Directions

Preheat oven to 400° F. In a large bowl, mix mozzarella, half the olive oil, half of the basil and salt. In a 8 x 8-inch baking dish, place peppers cut side up. Fill each pepper to the top with the mozzarella mixture.

In a small bowl, combine bread crumbs, Parmesan, salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle the breadcrumb mixture over peppers and scatter the rest of the basil on top. Dribble the remaining olive oil over the top and bake 10-15 minutes until the cheese is soft and the breadcrumbs have browned slightly. Transfer to serving plate and serve immediately.