



GRILLED COLORADO PEACHES, CABRALES CROSTINI, PX SHERRY REDUCTION serves 6

From the Rioja cookbook, The Perfect Bite
Chef Jennifer Jasinski

Most people don't know that we have the best peaches in the country in Colorado. They really scream summer; most grow on the Western Slope, where it is a bit warmer year round. In the 10 years I have lived in Colorado, especially being from Santa Barbara, I have come to appreciate the local products that make Colorado so special, and peaches in August are one of them.

1 sourdough baguette
10 ounces Cabrales cheese (preferred) or Valdeon cheese* (8 ounces for the crostini, 2 ounces to garnish)
1 cup pure olive oil
3 sprigs fresh rosemary
1/4 cup flat-leaf parsley leaves, cleaned and no stems
Kosher salt and black pepper, to taste
6 ripe Colorado peaches
1/2 pound organic arugula
Pedro Ximénez 1979 sherry (preferred) or any vintage PX sherry, to taste
6 paper-thin slices serrano or prosciutto ham

**Cabrales cheese is a tangy, bold Spanish bleu usually found wrapped in fig or chestnut leaves. Valdeon is also a Spanish bleu cheese, but it's not as creamy or bold as Cabrales.*

†Keeping with our Spanish flavors, Pedro Ximénez makes a Spanish sherry that is an intensely sweet, dark dessert wine. Fortified wines of this type are called "PX" sherries.

Cut the baguette into 12 bias-cut pieces 1/2 inch thick and about 5 inches long. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In a food processor, add 8 ounces of the Cabrales cheese and 1/2 cup of the olive oil. Blend until smooth.

Dip each piece of bread into the cheese mix and then place on a tray covered with parchment paper. Bake in the 350-degree oven for about 5 minutes. You want the bread to be crispy on the outside but still a bit soft in the center.



Strip the rosemary off of the stems and place the leaves in a blender with the parsley leaves and the remaining 1/2 cup olive oil; blend until a beautiful green rosemary oil is made. Season the oil to taste with salt and pepper and place it in a small container until it is ready to serve.

Preheat grill to high heat. For the peaches, there are 2 ways you can prepare them. 1.) If you like the skin, you can cut the peach in half, remove the pit and then brush the peach with a tiny bit of olive oil. Grill the peach over high just to make nice grill marks and warm the peach through. 2.) If you do not like the skin, quickly blanch the skin off the peach by scoring the end of the peach with an "X" and then placing it in a pot of boiling water for about 10 seconds; immediately plunge it into ice water to cool the peach. This should release the skin and you can easily peel off the skin. Finish grilling as above.

In a bowl, toss the arugula with the rosemary oil and a bit of the sherry wine; season with salt and pepper. Place a slice of ham along the bottom of each salad plate. Mound the arugula in the center of the plate and then place 2 warm crostini over the salad. Crumble a bit more cheese on the salad. Place 1 or 2 peach halves on the plate and then drizzle with more rosemary oil and sherry wine.

Reprinted with permission from [Rioja](#) and [The Perfect Bite](#) by Jennifer Jasinski copyright © 2010 by Jennifer Jasinski. Published by Rioja Denver (www.rioadenver.com)



Reprinted with permission from Rioja and *The Perfect Bite* by Jennifer Jasinski copyright © 2010 by Jennifer Jasinski. Published by Rioja Denver (www.riojadenver.com)