

Avocado Oil Marinated Mozzarella

The month of December is busy. Between parties, shopping, and family gatherings, there's not a lot of time for much else. When everyone in your life knows you love to cook, you get asked to bring something (or more accurately *make* something) every time you go anywhere.

I don't mind making things, but I don't always have time for complicated, time-consuming dishes. That's where recipes like this come in. It's super simple, perfect for entertaining, and everyone loves it. Seriously, make these marinated mozzarella balls, take them to a party, and tell me that there are any left. You can't.

This is not a new idea, but the use of extra-virgin avocado oil instead of traditional olive oil makes it a little bit different, in a good way. The floral aroma of the oil pairs nicely with the lemon zest, garlic, and spices.

Another great thing about this recipe is that it can be prepared way in advance or just before you need it. If you have time to marinate for a few days (or up to a week), do so, but it's not necessary.

Serve at room temperature with your favorite cured meats, olives, nuts, or bread, or just eat as is.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup extra-virgin avocado oil
- 3 cloves garlic, sliced
- 3-4 tablespoons fresh chopped herbs like rosemary, parsley, or thyme
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 1 teaspoon whole peppercorns
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (more or less depending on how much heat you like)
- 2 teaspoons white wine vinegar
- 1 pound fresh mozzarella balls (often called Ciliegine or Bocconcini)
- Sea salt, to taste

Directions:

Put the oil and the garlic in a medium saucepan and bring to a low simmer. Simmer for 5 minutes, turn off heat and let stand until cooled.

Add herbs, lemon zest, peppercorns, pepper flakes, and vinegar and stir.

Put the mozzarella in a container with lid and pour the oil over top. Cover and marinate in the fridge until ready to serve. Serve at room temperature.