

Pip, Pip, Piperade it's The Last Supper

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A piperade is a Basque dish, which according to La Rousse Gastronomique is “rich stew of tomatoes and sweet (bell) peppers, sometimes seasoned with onion and garlic, cooked in olive oil or goose fat and then mixed with beaten eggs and lightly scrambled.” This version will include some poached eggs instead. In a dishes where there are subtle tomato flavors and the tomato is a highlight, I like to prepare a tomato concassée. This removes the skin and seeds. The olive oil taste comes through this dish, so use a good quality.

- $\frac{1}{2}$ pound (roughly 2 medium tomatoes) tomatoes concassée
- 4 oz of julienned roasted sweet peppers (with the red tomatoes I prefer green, yellow or orange peppers)
- 2 tbsp garlic minced
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup onion, finely chopped
- 1 tsp fresh chopped thyme
- 1 tsp fresh seasoned bread crumbs
- 2 poached eggs

To prepare the tomato concassée, use a paring knife and mark on “X” on the bottom of the tomato just deep enough to penetrate the skin. Blanch the tomatoes in boiling water for 20-30 seconds. Quickly refresh in an ice bath. Using the paring knife again, cut out the core and peel the tomato. Cut the tomato in half. Squeeze the juice and seeds into a bowl. Chop the tomatoes. Pour the juice through a fine mesh strainer

and reserve the juice. Roast the peppers then place in a plastic bag for several minutes. This will make them easier to peel and remove the skins. Do not forget to seed and remove the inner membrane when preparing the peppers for slicing. Heat a medium pan over medium heat with some olive oil. Add the chopped onions and garlic and cook until the onions become translucent, and then add green peppers. Add the thyme and cook until any liquid has evaporated. Add tomatoes, bread crumbs and reserved juice to the pepper mixture. The mixture should be left to cook until it has thickened slightly. While this is thickening, poach 2 eggs. Plate by putting the vegetables on the bottom and the poached eggs on top and season with salt and pepper. Serve with warm bread.