



# Spring Appetizers

By Jane Steele  
Photography by Marty Shortum Studio

Summer seems a long time away, and it grows longer still each time I have to eat a store-bought winter tomato. They can be flavorless and mealy and the waxy skin leaves me longing for the hot, July sun. Luckily, there are grape tomatoes to see us through until those first homegrown beauties pop out of our gardens. Sweet and juicy, grape tomatoes are perfect for roasting in a low temperature oven during a cold, boring Sunday. I use the leftover tomato oil to cook with eggs or drizzle over pasta. These tomatoes are always in my fridge and once you make them, winter seems not so cold after all.

Artichokes used to be a seasonal vegetable. Now we can use them all the time, but it took me a good 20 years to get up the guts to discard almost the whole thing and just use the heart. Searing the artichokes in butter brings out the sugar in the artichoke and caramelizes to give it a crispy crunch and buttery flavor. The peasant in me still saves the leaves to steam later. I just make sure to soak them in some acidulated water to prevent them from turning black.

## ROASTED TOMATOES WITH GOAT CHEESE

Serves 8 as an appetizer

- 1 2-lb pkg grape tomatoes
- 2 cups extra virgin olive oil (cut down on the oil if you want, but you can strain it and use it for a multitude of things later)

Kosher salt and pepper to taste

1. Preheat oven to 325. Place tomatoes in a small Pyrex baking dish. Pour oil over tomatoes, sprinkle with salt and pepper and toss.
2. Roast tomatoes in oven for one hour. Check to see if they are browning. The goal is to remove most of the liquid from the tomatoes, then evaporate the liquid from the pan. Continue roasting until they are shriveled and brown, 1-2 additional hours.
3. Remove from Pyrex and pour into an airtight container. Store up to 5 days. To serve, pour over a log of goat cheese and garnish with chiffonade of mint, basil or parsley. Serve with crackers or make individual crostini.

## SHAVED ARTICHOKE HEART WITH LEMON & THYME GOAT CHEESE

SERVES 8 AS APPETIZER

- 1 large artichoke or 2 small ones
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1/2 lemon
- 6 tbsp goat cheese
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme
- 1 tbsp cream or milk

Kosher salt and pepper to taste

1. Remove the tough, outer leaves of the artichoke by pulling them off with your hands. With a sharp knife, cut the top leaves off close to the heart. Using a small paring knife, cut any remaining tough green outer leaves off. Remove choke with spoon and immediately rub all over with lemon to prevent oxidation.
2. Mix goat cheese with cream (or milk) and thyme with a little pepper. Use a fork to blend. Goat cheese can sometimes be chalky, so you want to make it creamy. Set aside.
3. Using a mandolin on the thinnest setting, shave the artichoke into thin slices. Add oil and butter to a 10-inch pan on medium-high heat and cook until butter is bubbly. Add artichoke and sear until edges start to brown. Flip slices over and continue until tender and crispy. Add a squeeze of lemon juice (about 1 tsp) and remove from pan.
4. Spread 1 tsp goat cheese on a crostini and top with artichoke shavings. Garnish with fresh thyme and serve. \*

**REAL TEXAS BAR-B-Q**

We've been servin' up our award-winning, slow-smoked Bar-B-Q in El Paso for over 25 years.

**CONTINUOUS SERVICE 7 DAYS A WEEK**

**THE STATE LINE**  
*Legendary Bar-B-Q*

1222 Sunland Park Dr. • 915-581-3371 www.countyline.com

Specializing in the El Paso Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen for the Cure

**susan g. Komen FOR THE CURE EL PASO**

**Dine-Out for the Cure®**  
 Thank You to Our Sponsors for a Successful Event

**g<sub>2</sub> GREENERY restaurant-market**

**the table**

**KÈVA JUICE**

**Jaxon's**

**THE MOUNTAIN**

**CAFFETTO'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT**

**JB'S CAFE**

**Arila's RESTAURANT**

915. 533.4433 www.elpasokomen.org