

Tempting Tapas

(NAPSA)—Originally a Spanish tradition, tapas dining, which includes sampling and sharing a variety of bite-sized dishes, has become a hot new trend around the world. Tapas, from the Spanish verb “tapar,” means “to cover,” and a tapa was originally a snack placed on top of a drink to protect it while dining outdoors.

Dining tapas style is a creative way to enjoy food with friends and family, allowing for many different taste experiences and combinations. Tapas parties are a unique and deliciously fun way to entertain. Dishes are generally simple, combining small portions of grilled meats, vegetables or seafood with slices of olives, cheese or bread. Add a frosty pitcher of sangria, and you’re ready to serve your guests some of Spain’s tasty tapas.

Each region of Spain has its own tapas specialty. For example, if you were taking in the stunning architecture of Seville, you might stop for a serving of freshly harvested Mediterranean fish paired with Manchego cheese stuffed olives.

Don’t be afraid to experiment with different topping combinations and see just how creative your tapas can be. For tempting tapas, companies such as The Pampered Chef have created the tools and recipes that will help you experience the pleasures of Spain right in your own kitchen.

Try The Pampered Chef’s Garlic Shrimp Crostini or one of the variations listed below for easy but elegant tapas.

Garlic Shrimp Crostini

Savory Cheese Crostini
24 slices French bread, cut
¼-inch thick



2 tablespoons olive oil
4 ounces cream cheese,
softened
1 package (3.5-4 ounces)
goat cheese
¾ teaspoon Pantry Italian
Seasoning Mix
1 garlic clove, pressed

Garlic Shrimp Topping
2 tablespoons butter or
margarine
3 garlic cloves, pressed
12 ounces uncooked small
shrimp, peeled and
deveined (about 50)
¼ cup finely diced red bell
pepper
2 tablespoons snipped fresh
parsley

For crostini, preheat oven to 375° F. Place bread slices on Rectangle Stone; lightly brush with oil. Bake 10-12 minutes or until light golden brown; remove from oven. In Classic Batter Bowl, combine cream cheese, goat cheese, seasoning mix and garlic; set aside.

For shrimp, heat butter in Large (10-in.) Skillet over medium-high heat until melted

and bubbly. Press garlic into skillet using Garlic Press. Add shrimp and bell pepper; cook and stir 3-5 minutes or until shrimp are pink and opaque. Remove from heat; stir in parsley.

To serve, spread each crostini with cheese mixture. Top with two of the shrimp; serve immediately on Simple Additions® Large Square Platter. Yield: 24 appetizers

Pesto-Almond Topping: Place ¼ cup chopped toasted almonds and one container (7 ounces) refrigerated basil pesto in separate containers. Layer over toasted crostini.

Warm Marinara Topping: Combine ¼ cup grated fresh Parmesan cheese and 2 tablespoons snipped fresh parsley in small bowl. Warm one can (15 oz.) pizza sauce in a Small Micro-Cooker for 1-2 minutes or until hot; spoon onto crostini and top with cheese mixture.

For more information on The Pampered Chef, to host a Tapas Kitchen Show or find a Kitchen Consultant, visit www.pamperedchef.com or call 800-266-5562.