



caramelized apple and blue cheese crostini

**MAKES 16
CROSTINI**

20 MINUTES

These crostini are a cinch to make, and they will surprise your guests with the unexpected combination of caramelized apple, blue cheese, and tarragon. Serve them with a crisp, dry white wine for an elegant pre-dinner snack.

I prefer a creamy blue cheese that will get a little melty on the warm apples, such as Bleu de Causses, but any blue cheese will work. Instead of tarragon, you could use basil or even arugula.

If you have any fancy finishing salts (which you can find at high-end food retailers), this is the perfect dish to use them on. A few grains will sit beautifully on top of the apples and add a bit of extra crunch and interest.

½ cup loosely packed fresh tarragon leaves

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

16 thin slices crusty baguette

1 tablespoon unsalted butter

2 small apples (such as Pink Lady), each cut into 16 wedges

Tiny pinch of cayenne pepper

Freshly ground black pepper

¼ cup blue cheese (such as Bleu de Causses or Gorgonzola Dolce), at room temperature

Flaky sea salt (such as Maldon) or large-crystal sea salt (such as red Hawaiian salt)

- 1** Preheat the oven or toaster oven to 400°F.
- 2** Set aside 32 nice-looking tarragon leaves. In a mortar and pestle or mini food processor, coarsely puree the remaining tarragon with the olive oil.
- 3** Brush the baguette slices with the tarragon oil, reserving the crushed tarragon. Arrange on a baking sheet and toast in the oven or toaster oven until golden brown and crispy, about 5 minutes.
- 4** Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Cook the apples in a single layer, turning once (work in batches if needed), until both sides are golden brown and somewhat tender, about 5 minutes. Season with a pinch of cayenne pepper and several grinds of black pepper.
- 5** To serve, arrange 2 slices of cooked apple on each piece of toast. Top with ½ teaspoon of the blue cheese, a speck of the crushed tarragon, 2 whole tarragon leaves, and a few grains of sea salt.