Tuna Pan Bagna

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This Provencal-style sandwich literally means "bathed bread." Though you can eat them immediately after preparation, we recommend wrapping tightly in plastic wrap and refrigerating the sandwiches for several hours. This lets the bread soak up all of the juicy goodness of the ingredients.

4 servings

Active Time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

1 16-inch-long loaf French bread

1/4 cup lemon juice

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

1 clove garlic, finely chopped

1 6-ounce can chunk light tuna, packed in olive oil, drained, rinsed and squeezed dry, or packed in water, squeezed dry

1 large vine-ripened tomato, seeded and chopped

1 red bell pepper, chopped

2 scallions, trimmed and chopped

2 tablespoons chopped pitted black olives, preferably Kalamata

1 1/2 tablespoons capers, rinsed

1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme, or 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme leaves

Salt & freshly ground pepper to taste

PREPARATION

Cut bread in half lengthwise. Scoop out crumbs from both halves, leaving 1/2-inch-thick shells.

Process the crumbs in a food processor or blender until finely chopped; set aside.

Whisk together lemon juice, oil and garlic in a large bowl. Stir in the reserved breadcrumbs, tuna, tomatoes, bell peppers, scallions, olives, capers and thyme; mix well. Season with salt and pepper.

Spoon the breadcrumb mixture into the bottom bread shell and replace the top. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap and refrigerate for a few hours.