

# Massimo's "Farinella" (Grain and Tomato Salad)

*This recipe was available in print copies earlier in the season; here is a reprise, for those who did not previously pick up a copy or have joined subsequently.*

One summer my husband, Massimo, and I vacationed with our son, Max, near Lucca, about an hour from Florence. There we discovered a local specialty: farro, an ancient grain (emmer, often called spelt, in English) similar to barley, traditionally used in bean soup there. We bought lots of it, and Massimo then made a salad based on panzanella but substituting the boiled farro for soaked and squeezed bread — a terrific idea that has become a warm-weather favorite.

## Ingredients

- 1 cup (about 6 ounces) half-peeled emmer, spelt, or pearl barley, rinsed and drained
- 6 cups water
- 1 small red onion, chopped coarse
- 2 tablespoons red-wine vinegar
- 4 medium vine-ripened tomatoes, peeled (if desired), seeded, and chopped coarse
- 1 cucumber, peeled, seeded, and chopped coarse
- 1/2 cup arugula or purslane leaves, washed well, spun dry, and chopped
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil leaves
- 3 to 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- fine sea salt to taste
- freshly ground black pepper to taste

## Preparation

In a 3-quart saucepan combine spelt or barley, water, and salt to taste and simmer just until tender, 35 to 40 minutes. Drain spelt in a colander and rinse with cold water. Chill spelt 30 minutes, or until cold.

While spelt is cooking and chilling, in a bowl combine onion and vinegar and let stand at room temperature. Add chilled spelt and remaining ingredients and toss to combine well. Serves 4 to 6.

- Faith Willinger, Red, White & Greens, September 1996