

## **Polenta Bites with Basil Aioli**

*This is a fab looking appetizer to take to a party. You could also serve this as a side dish. Great served with a simple grilled or roasted chicken breast. For a side dish, half the tomatoes and spoon on to each serving, top with basil aioli.*

### Basil mayonnaise

1 cup mayonnaise  
3/4 cup (lightly packed) torn fresh basil leaves (from 1 large bunch)  
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice  
2 teaspoons fresh minced garlic

For basil mayonnaise:

Combine mayonnaise, basil, and lemon juice in processor. Blend until smooth (some basil bits will remain). Season mayonnaise with salt and pepper. Transfer to small bowl, cover, and refrigerate. (Can be made 2 days ahead. Keep refrigerated.)

### Tartlets

24 small grape tomatoes  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1 tablespoon olive oil good quality Italian such as Castello di Ama  
Sprinkle of sea salt

2 cups water  
1 teaspoon coarse kosher salt  
1/2 cup (3 ounces) golden polenta

1/3 cup (packed) grated Parmesan cheese  
1 tablespoon unsalted butter  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon pepper

### **For tartlets:**

Combine grape tomatoes with garlic and olive oil and a sprinkle of salt set aside. Bring water and salt to a boil. Slowly add polenta. Adjust heat to very low cook stirring often, until thickened, about 15 minutes. Stir in parmesan cheese and butter, season with salt and pepper. Spread in 8x8 pan and refrigerate.

Using a 1 ounce ice cream scoop, scoop the polenta and level, set on tray. Push one grape tomato in center. Top each polenta bite with a small dollop of basil aioli. Garnish with fresh basil.

Leftover aioli? You're in luck!

- Aioli makes a great sandwich spread. I always serve it with club sandwiches.
- Serve the aioli with sliced tomatoes for a salad.
- Great spread on a burger
- Serve the aioli with steamed vegetables

- Top roasted or grilled fresh fish fillets
- Serve aioli with cooked shrimp for a fun shrimp cocktail.
- The basil could easily be changed up with parsley, chives, tarragon, and cilantro.