



The OG Olive Tapenade

Makes: 24 deviled eggs

MANY THINK OF tapenade as a simple olive spread, but when one Marseille chef (see “France’s Great Melting Pot,” p. 40) tracked down the original recipe, he uncovered a surprisingly different dish than what most are familiar with today.

In 1880, La Canebière—Marseille’s main drag—was lined with elegant cafés. The most sumptuous was La Maison Dorée, where Chef Meynier (whose first name never made the history books) is said to have created the now-canonized blend of olives, capers, and anchovies. He dubbed it “tapenade” for the tapenas, or “capers” in Provençal, which locals have been cooking with for at least 2,600 years, and which gave the spread its signature zing. But few French food lovers know that Meynier’s inaugural recipe called for tuna, cognac, and English mustard. Perhaps most intriguing of all, it was served deviled style, in a hard-boiled egg.

Tapenade caught on so fast that, despite Meynier’s recipe appearing in *La Cuisinière Provençal* (the region’s equivalent to *Joy of Cooking*), it was lost in a sea of less pungent, and notably eggless, variations. The original may have been forgotten altogether if Chef Noël Baudrand—who runs Le Capucin restaurant in the very space where La Maison Dorée once stood—hadn’t dusted it off and put it on the menu. “I’m proud to be reviving the historical recipe,” he said. Tapenade has finally come full circle. And still feels at home 144 years later.

The original recipe calls for both oil-packed and salt-cured anchovies, but they can be used interchangeably. If using salt-cured anchovies only, rinse and dry them before proceeding with the recipe. —Alexis Steinman

- 1½ cups brined capers, drained
- 1¼ cups oil-cured black or niçoise olives, pitted
- ½ cup olive oil-packed tuna, flaked
- 1 Tbsp. plus 2 tsp. prepared English-style mustard, such as Colman’s
- 1 Tbsp. cognac, plus more
- ½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper, plus more
- 6 oil-packed anchovy fillets
- 4 salt-cured anchovy fillets, pin bones removed
- 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- + Crostini or baguette slices, for serving
- 12 hard-boiled eggs (optional*), peeled and halved lengthwise

• In a food processor, pulse the capers, olives, tuna, mustard, cognac, black pepper, and both kinds of anchovies to a very coarse paste. Using a silicone spatula, scrape down the sides of the bowl. With the machine running, gradually add the oil until incorporated. (Do not overmix; the tapenade should be coarse yet spreadable.) Season to taste with more cognac and black pepper. Scrape into a serving bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 2 days to let the flavors marry. Serve with crostini, or spoon into hard-boiled eggs (see below).

***Note:** To serve in hard-boiled eggs, transfer the boiled yolks to a small bowl and arrange the whites on a serving platter. Using a teaspoon or a piping bag, mound the tapenade into the egg white halves so the filling reaches ½ inch above the flat surface of the whites. Garnish with finely grated boiled egg yolks. (Reserve the remaining tapenade and boiled yolks for another use.)