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California Avocados

Create the perfect appetizer for your festive gathering using California avocados. This tasty recipe is surprisingly simple to make and brings an added bonus of nutritious ingredients. Hy-Vee Registered Dietitian Melissa Jaeger, RD, LD will teach your viewers how to prepare this festive side dish or appetizer, and will highlight the health benefits of California-grown avocados.

Melissa Jaeger, RD, LD represents Hy-Vee as a nutrition expert promoting healthy eating throughout the community. Melissa Jaeger, RD, LD is a member of the Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics.

Avocado Bruschetta

Serves 20

All you need:

1 cup packed arugula leaves
½ cup packed basil leaves
¼ cup packed parsley leaves
2 tbs Hy-Vee Select extra-virgin olive oil
½ jalapeno pepper, seeded and chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced, divided
½ tsp + 1 tbs lime juice, divided
2 tbs Hy-Vee butter, melted
5 slice(s) whole-grain sprout bread, quartered
3 California avocados, halved, seeded, peeled and thinly sliced
Red pepper flakes, to taste

All you do:

1. In food processor, combine arugula, basil, parsley, olive oil, jalapeno pepper, 1 clove garlic and ½-teaspoon lime juice. Cover and process until smooth; set aside.
2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
3. In a small bowl, combine butter and remaining minced garlic. Arrange bread quarters on a large rimmed baking sheet; brush with garlic butter. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes or until crisp and golden.
4. Meanwhile, toss avocado slices with 1 tablespoon lime juice. Arrange avocado slices on toasted bread. Place arugula mixture in a resealable plastic bag. Snip one corner and drizzle over avocado toast. If desired, sprinkle with red pepper flakes. Serve immediately.

*Note: Chile peppers contain volatile oils that can burn skin and eyes. When working with Chile peppers, wear protective gloves.

Nutrition Facts: 90 calories per serving, Total Fat: 7g, Saturated Fat: 1.5g, Trans Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 5mg, Sodium: 40mg, Total carbs: 7g, Dietary Fiber 3g, Total Sugars: 1g, Protein 2g

Recipe Source: <https://www.hy-vee.com/recipes-ideas/recipes/avocado-bruschetta>



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Dietitian Talking Points:

Health Benefits of California Avocados:

- ✓ California avocados have “California” indicated on the label. Choose these American-grown options as part of your next celebration!
- ✓ Over 75% of the fat in avocados is unsaturated (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats), making them a great substitute for foods high in saturated fat.
- ✓ Avocados contribute nearly 20 vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients, including folate, vitamin K, riboflavin, potassium, niacin, vitamin B6, manganese and iron, to name just a few.
- ✓ Antioxidants found in avocados can help protect cells from free radical damage. A few of the antioxidants found in avocados include beta-carotene (promoting eye health), lutein (also promoting eye health), lycopene (can help protect against cancer), selenium (important for heart health), and vitamins A (eye health), C (immune boosting) and E (beneficial for skin and hair).
- ✓ Consuming avocados as part of a balanced diet can help manage blood sugar levels. Consider pairing avocados with sources of carbohydrates such as potatoes to help slow down the digestion of the carbs.

Five Reasons to Eat California Avocados:

1. **Good Fat.** Avocados contain monounsaturated fat, a fat that helps promote heart and brain health.
2. **Fiber.** One-third of an avocado provides 3 grams of fiber, a good source for any diet.
3. **Potassium.** Avocados are high in potassium, which may help reduce blood pressure.
4. **Easy To Use.** Sliced, diced, smashed, stuffed or whole; avocados are great for breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks.
5. **Baking Swap.** Try replacing one-half of the butter or oil in baking recipes with an equal amount of mashed, ripe avocados. Reduce baking temperature by 25 degrees.

Selection and Prep:

- ✓ Be sure to wash avocados before cutting into them.
- ✓ When selecting an avocado, aim for a texture that feels similar to a baked potato.
- ✓ To ripen a California avocado, place the fruit in a paper bag with an apple, banana or kiwi for two to five days at room temperature. (These fruits accelerate the process by giving off ethylene, a natural hormone that promotes ripening.) When the avocados yield to gentle pressure, they are ready.
- ✓ Peeling instead of scooping an avocado can help to get the most out of it, and will also help you access the darkest green part closest to the skin (which has the most nutritional value).

Connect with your Hy-Vee Dietitian:

- ✓ Connect with your local Hy-Vee dietitian on our NEW virtual nutrition services platform. To learn more, visit www.hy-vee.com/health and schedule a complimentary Discovery Session with your Hy-Vee dietitian.
- ✓ We offer a variety of services to help you meet your weight loss goals, including one-on-one consultation packages, personalized menu plan programs, virtual nutrition store tours and more!



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- ✓ **Baby's First Foods Virtual Cooking Class:** Hy-Vee dietitians will be hosting "Baby's First Foods" Cooking classes throughout the month of July. During class, your Hy-Vee dietitian will address how to introduce your baby to foods and demonstrate both baby-led weaning and puree recipes. Register today by visiting <https://www.hy-vee.com/health/hy-vee-dietitians/default.aspx>.
- ✓ **Hy-Vee Healthy Habits:** Eating healthy doesn't have to be hard! Our dietitian-created menu program includes a 7-day meal plan including three meals and two to three snacks daily. The portions are aligned to fit your caloric needs and our program takes away the question of "What's for dinner tonight?" This menu plan comes complete with a grocery-shopping list and easy-to-follow recipes each week. Along the way, you will receive one-on-one support from a Hy-Vee registered dietitian. For more information or to register visit: <https://www.hy-vee.com/health/hy-vee-dietitians/default.aspx>.