

**Feta, radishes, watercress and
mint toasts**



I always struggle with appetizers. I think I'm not good at them and I think I repeat things too much. I always want to make something different, but it has to be easy. You know how it is, you read all these great sounding recipes and you want to make them all and then the day of, or mid-way through your party menu, you

realize, uh oh, this is just too much! You've been there? Well this simple recipe of feta, radishes, watercress and mint toasts is really perfect! It's different, delicious, has wonderful fresh bursts of flavor, and a contrast of textures with the crunchiness of the radishes, the creaminess of the feta, the chewiness of the peasant bread, and then there's that surprise burst of mint that is so refreshing. And most importantly, it's easy. Is it hard to tell I like this?

In talking about the mint, which is my addition to the original [Food & Wine recipe](#), don't put any more than three leaves on each serving. I always keep in mind an article by April Bloomfield (of John Dory Oyster Bar, The Breslin and Spotted Pig restaurant fame) from a few years ago. She said these surprise bursts of flavors, whether it's a perfectly toasted, spicy warm nut or a wonderful cube of pancetta, should be scattered judiciously in a dish so that you search for them and feel elated and satiated when you've discovered the little gem again.

I made this recipe as a starter to a lunch that reconnected me to my dear friend, [Joan](#), and her whole family. We hadn't seen each other in 30 years! She was one of my bridesmaids. She came in from St. Louis, her sister and mother from Nashville and her brother and his partner live just 20 minutes from us in upstate NY, which we didn't know before. It was a wonderful reunion on a beautiful sunny Saturday in late April, the kind where you just can't talk fast enough, you have so much to catch up on. It's so fantastic to reunite with old friends. Even though you have so much to talk about, you can still speak in shorthand, because of the history you have. Isn't that just so nice?



It's so pretty, isn't it? Now if only the watercress could be blue, you would have the perfect July 4th dish with this! (just kidding)

FETA, RADISHES, WATERCRESS AND MINT TOASTS - serve 8

½ bunch watercress, thick stems discarded

16 - 24 fresh mint leaves

Salt and freshly ground pepper

Four 1/2-inch-thick slices of peasant bread, sliced in half

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling

3 - 5 radishes, thinly sliced (use a hand mandoline)

4 oz. French feta cheese, at room temperature

Heat a cast-iron grill pan or two large skillets. Brush the bread with 1/4 cup of olive oil and grill over high heat, turning once, until toasted. Spread the feta on top of the toasts, distribute radish slices, top with watercress and two to three mint leaves on each. Drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle very lightly with salt and fresh ground pepper and serve.