

SMOKY CILANTRO PESTO BEEF CROSTINI

Total preparation and cooking time: 40 to 45 minutes

Marinating time: 15 minutes to 2 hours



2 well-trimmed beef shoulder center steaks, cut 1 inch thick (about 8 ounces each)

24 slices baguette bread, cut diagonally 1/2 inch thick

1/4 cup grated Cotija cheese

1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro

Smoky Cilantro

Pesto:

3 cups loosely packed fresh cilantro leaves

1/4 cup pine nuts, lightly toasted

2 small chipotle peppers in adobo sauce

2 cloves garlic

1 tablespoon fresh lime juice

1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

1/2 cup grated Cotija cheese

1/2 cup olive oil

1. Prepare Smoky Cilantro Pesto. Place cilantro, pine nuts, chipotle peppers, garlic, lime juice and black pepper in food processor container. Cover; process until finely chopped. Add cheese; pulse on and off until just combined. With motor running, slowly add oil through opening in cover, processing until smooth.
2. Spread 1/4 cup pesto evenly onto beef steaks. Place steaks in glass dish. Cover and marinate in refrigerator 15 minutes to 2 hours. Cover and refrigerate remaining pesto.
3. Place steaks on grid over medium, ash-covered coals. Arrange 12 bread slices around steaks. Grill steaks, covered, 11 to 14 minutes for medium rare to medium doneness, turning occasionally. Grill bread slices 2 to 3 minutes or until lightly toasted, turning once. Remove bread slices from grill. Repeat with remaining 12 bread slices.
4. Spread 2 teaspoons remaining pesto on each toasted bread slice. Carve steaks into thin slices. Place beef slices evenly over bread slices. Top evenly with 1/4 cup cheese and chopped cilantro. Serve immediately.

Makes 24 appetizers.

