

The summer season is blessed every year with an abundance of multi-colored, firm and sweet tomatoes ripe for the taking (and cooking). The versatility of this unique fruit is endless through its many varieties, dish options and cooking techniques. Along with their versatility and seasonality, tomatoes are full of lycopene and essential vitamins and minerals - ideal for your health and well-being!

Varieties

The varieties of tomatoes are endless! Sizes, level of sweetness and acidity are all great determinants when deciding what tomato to pair with other ingredients to make the perfect dish. Larger varieties such as heirlooms, beefsteak and globes are perfect for slicing and dicing. Smaller varieties such as grape, roma and cherry tomatoes are great whole, halved or quartered depending on your dish purpose. Tomato paste, tomato juice and sundried tomatoes are all great convenience items to improve dinner in a flash! In these hot summer months, search your local farmers markets for the freshest tomatoes available.

Inspiration

Fresh tomatoes can be so beautiful in their natural, raw state—dressed with a swirl of olive oil and a sprinkling of fine salt or simply snacked

on like candy. Along with these simple ideas, using fresh tomatoes can go far beyond burger toppings or caprese salads. Although these are wonderful in themselves, there are so many diverse uses for tomatoes in your daily diet.

Sips

Although tomato juice is commonly associated with Bloody Marys, tomatoes can be very versatile beyond this popular brunch cocktail. Mix your favorite tomato juice with summer melon, ice and Greek yogurt for a sweet smoothie.

Spreads

Tomato-based spreads are perfect vessels to add flavor without fat when intensifying dishes. Add a simmered tomato jam atop a toasted baguette for a non-traditional bruschetta. Puree sundried tomatoes with toasted walnuts, olive oil and honey for a Mediterranean-style dip perfect for a mezza spread.

Tempting Tomatoes

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Photography by Kari Crowe

Local Tomato Carpaccio

Assorted local tomatoes, sliced very thin

Fine Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Lemon juice

Smoked Sea Salt

Creative Tomato Dishes to Try

Dish type	Add tomatoes!
Sips	Tomato Watermelon Smoothie with Greek Yogurt
Snacks	"BLT" Bruschetta with Chive Butter Spread
Soups	Warm Roasted Tomato and Hatch Chile Gazpacho
Spreads	Grilled Bratwurst with Pickled Okra and Tomatoes
Sauces	Eggs Benedict with Pancetta and Tomato Hollandaise
Sides	Creamy Polenta with Parmesan & Plum Tomato Jam
Sweets	Buttermilk Panna Cotta with Candied Cherry Tomatoes



Sauces

Go beyond the traditional marinara when constructing tomato based sauces. Roast tomatoes and sweet peppers together and puree with almonds, oil and garlic for a fiery and hearty romesco sauce. Add a subtle burst of flavor by whisking tomato paste or puree into your favorite homemade vinaigrette.

Snacks

Tomatoes are not only healthful, but the perfect portable snack for those on the move! Bake thin-sliced roma tomatoes with sea salt and olive oil on low temperature for homemade oven-dried tomato chips. Dip in hummus for a protein-packed snack.

Soups

Fill up on a healthful soup alternative to cut calories at an elegant meal out. Make large batches of tomato gazpacho or pureed tomato soup with a dash of cream and freeze in single portions to always have soup on hand. Tomato pulp is multifaceted as a delicious flavor in soups, but also as a natural thickener in soups yielding a much more healthful alternative to a heavy roux.

Main dishes

Go meatless one evening with a vegetarian alternative to steaks on the barbeque. Grill thick slices of beefsteak tomatoes and layer napoleon-style with warm smoked mozzarella, grilled eggplant and a sprinkling of pine nuts.

Sides

Simple side dishes are a breeze with tomatoes! Roast plums, cherries or grapes at a high heat with olive oil, fine salt and pepper and fresh herbs until burst and caramelized. Serve as a side dish with baked fish or steaks.

Dice raw varieties of tomatoes and mix with sweet and hot peppers, scallions and chickpeas with vibrant spices for a play on Texas caviar.

Sweets

Remember the natural sweetness of tomatoes when thinking of unconventional dessert combinations. Instead of the traditional raspberry, make a tomato sorbet for a refreshing summer treat. Finish baked custards with elegant sugared tomatoes and fresh mint for a colorful stray from the ordinary.

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