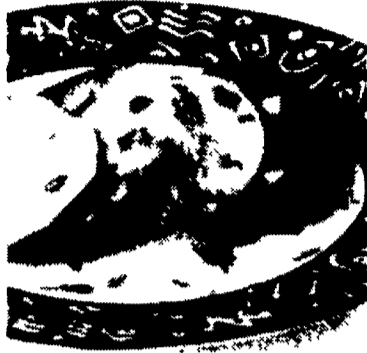


Home on the Range

In-Season Tomatoes Burst With Flavor And Possibilities



Tomato-Mozzarella Salad Dijon provides in-season flavor.

The flavor of fresh tomatoes varies not only from the variety but also according to when picked. The less ripe they are when picked, the less flavor.

That's why vine-ripened tomatoes available from local gardens taste so much better than those picked green in distant states and shipped to ripen between the farm and you.

Select tomatoes with a good shape and a smooth, even skin that has no breaks, bruises, or green or yellow patches. Tomatoes should feel heavy for their size and be red and slightly soft. Firmer tomatoes will ripen given time.

Small tomatoes are best for making salads and casseroles. Medium and large ones are good for slicing, stuffing, or marinating. Overripe tomatoes of all sizes are best used in making tomato sauce.

Leave unripened tomatoes at room temperature. Store ripened tomatoes refrigerated in a plastic bag or in a refrigerator drawer for three to seven days. Long refrigeration will cause them to lose flavor and nutrients.

OPEN-FACE

TOMATO SANDWICH

On a cookie sheet, place four slices white bread. Top with four slices white American cheese. Top each with a generous slice of tomatoes. Top each with two slices partially cooked bacon. Broil until bacon is done and cheese is light brown.

Katherine Wagner
Mount Joy

TOMATO SALSA

1 basket tomatoes, peeled, cubed
6 cups chopped onions
10 green bell peppers, chopped
5 jalapeno peppers, chopped (more or less to suit taste)

Put chopped vegetables in a large kettle and add the following:

2 cups vinegar
3 tablespoons salt
2 tablespoons garlic powder
1 tablespoon chili powder
2 teaspoons cumin
2 cups brown sugar

Cook together ingredients for 30 minutes. Thicken with Clear Jel or Therm-flo (available at most bulk food stores). Cold pack 15 minutes. Makes 34 pints.

Note: For quick and easy peeling of tomatoes, put into boiling water about one minute. Peels will slide right off.

Blender or food processor works great for chopping veggies.

Anonymous Reader

TOMATO GRATIN

8 slices sourdough sandwich bread, toasted

2½ pounds large, ripe tomatoes, cut into ¼-inch thick slices

½ teaspoon minced fresh garlic

½ teaspoon salt

¼ cup snipped fresh chives

Ground black pepper

4-ounces soft goat cheese or crumbled feta cheese

1 tablespoon olive oil

2½ tablespoons grated parmesan cheese

Heat oven to 350 degrees.

Lightly coat a shallow 2-quart baking dish with olive cooking spray.

Arrange four slices bread over the bottom of baking dish, tearing to fit. Top with half the tomato slices.

Sprinkle garlic over tomatoes, and then sprinkle with half the chives. Season with salt and pepper.

Crumble the goat cheese over the chives and drizzle with half the oil.

Top with remaining bread slices, pressing firmly to fit.

Arrange the remaining tomato slices on top, then sprinkle with the remaining chives, the parmesan cheese, and additional pepper to taste. Drizzle with remaining 1½ teaspoon oil.

Bake for 40-45 minutes or until the cheese on top is golden and the tomatoes are soft. Serves 6.

Emily Cloninger

Centre Co. Dairy Princess

GAZPACHO

6 large tomatoes

1 large cucumber, peeled, seeded, chopped

1 large green bell pepper, finely chopped

1 red onion, minced

3 tablespoons red wine vinegar juice of ½ lemon plus 2 ta-

blespoons olive oil
2-3 tablespoons fresh parsley to taste

2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil OR 2 teaspoons dried salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Tabasco sauce to taste

Herb croutons (optional)

Peel tomatoes by submerging in boiling water for 15 seconds. Remove to a colander and rinse under cold water. The skins should slip right off. Core the tomatoes and gently squeeze out the seeds. Chop half of them coarsely and puree the other half in a food processor.

Combine the puree and chopped tomatoes in large mixing bowl. Blend the remaining ingredients except the herb croutons with the tomatoes. Cover and refrigerate for several hours before serving. Serve chilled; garnish with herb croutons. Makes 6 servings.

To make a thinner version, add 2 cups tomato juice.

FRESH TOMATO PIZZA WITH HERBS AND PARMESAN

1 thin, 12-inch prepared pizza crust

¼ cup lowfat marinara sauce

½ tablespoon dried oregano

½ cup fresh basil, chopped

6-8 ripe plum tomatoes, sliced ¼-inch thick

¼ cup parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

Spread pizza crust with sauce and sprinkle with oregano and basil. Layer the tomatoes all over the pizza. Sprinkle cheese evenly over the top, and bake on a baking sheet or pizza pan for 15 minutes. Cut into wedges and serve.

TOMATO-MOZZARELLA SALAD DIJON

¼ cup olive oil

¼ cup dijon mustard

2 tablespoons lemon juice

4 ripe tomatoes, sliced

8-ounces mozzarella cheese, sliced

1 small red onion, slivered

1 tablespoon fresh basil leaves

Whisk together oil, mustard, and lemon juice. Cover; refrigerate until serving time.

Arrange tomato and cheese slices on large serving platter or plates. Sprinkle with onion and basil. Drizzle with prepared dressing. Serve immediately.

SPINACH TOMATO BAKE

2½ cups water

1 tablespoon butter (optional)

¼ teaspoon salt

1½ cups brown rice

2 tablespoons canola oil

1 medium onion, chopped

1 clove garlic, chopped finely

½ pounds sliced mushrooms

16-ounces frozen spinach, thawed, moisture squeezed

Salt and pepper to taste

12-ounces cheddar cheese, shredded

1½ pounds tomatoes, cored, sliced thinly

¼ cup Romano cheese

Bread crumbs (optional)

Bring water to boil and add butter and salt. Add rice, stir, cover and reduce heat to low. Simmer 35-45 minutes until

Featured Recipe

TOMATO AND FRESH MOZZARELLA NAPOLEON

6 medium ripe tomatoes
18 mozzarella cheese slices
1 head Bibb lettuce, washed and dried

Vinaigrette

1 cup balsamic vinegar

½ cup olive oil

4-ounces caramelized roasted shallots

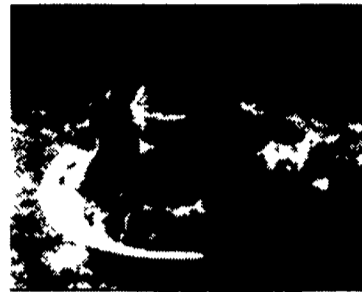
½ teaspoon fresh ground black pepper

½ teaspoon sugar

Salt to taste

To roast shallots, break out of their casing and drizzle with olive oil. Bake at 395 degrees in small covered baking dish 10-15 minutes until soft.

From each tomato, cut a thin slice from top and bottom, discard. Cut each tomato into three slices. Place one



Stem Tomato And Fresh Mozzarella Napoleon makes a showy dish.

slice mozzarella on each slice of tomato. Stack the three slices of tomato and mozzarella on top of each other. Arrange lettuce on six plates and place stacked tomato and mozzarella on top. Drizzle with vinaigrette. Serves 6.

Send Your Favorite Beef Recipe To Enter Contest

The Pennsylvania Beef Council and *Lancaster Farming* are sponsoring a beef recipe contest to highlight the versatility and nutritional value of beef. To enter the drawing, pick out your favorite recipe which includes a substantial amount of beef or veal.

Simply give us your favorite recipe to prepare that steak, roast, filet, or ground beef for your hungry family and write a short description on why the recipe is such a hit with your family.

Your recipe may fall into the appetizer, soup, entree, vegetable, snack and salad categories or any other creative way to prepare and present beef and veal.

The deadline to enter recipes is Friday, August 25. Contest winners will be printed in the September 2 issue of *Lancaster Farming*.

Send your entry immediately. Winners will be selected by a random drawing at the end of August, however *Lancaster Farming* will be printing beef recipes throughout September.

Please clearly print or type your recipe entry. Also be specific and accurate with measurements, temperatures, times, and sizes of baking dishes to use. We may disqualify entries if these guidelines are not followed.

Along with the recipe include your complete mailing address so we can send you a prize if you're a winner. In addition please enter one recipe per family. Contest participants must be 18 or older.

Send entries to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming Beef Recipe Contest, P.O. Box 609, 1 East Main Street, Ephrata, PA 17522.

water is absorbed. Set rice aside. Saute onion in oil over medium heat for about 4 minutes; add garlic, mushrooms, and chopped spinach. Add salt and pepper to taste, and saute another 4-6 minutes until onion and mushrooms are tender. Toss sauteed vegetables with cooked brown rice and sour cream. Add more salt and pepper if desired. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly butter a 9x13-inch pan or casserole and evenly layer vegetable-rice mixture over bottom. Sprinkle with half the shredded cheddar. Layer with half the tomato slices and add salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle with remaining cheddar and add another layer of remaining tomatoes. Finish with grated cheese and sprinkle of bread crumbs if desired. Bake until cheese melts and vegetables are heated through.

QUICKIE PASTA BAKE

1 pound pasta (penne or rotini)

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

1 onion, chopped

28-ounce can tomatoes, crushed

1 teaspoon oregano, dried

Salt and pepper

2 cups cheese, grated, any type

Preheat oven to 325 degrees.

Cook pasta on stove and drain. Meanwhile, heat oil in saucepan. Add onion and garlic, saute until soft, about 5 minutes. Add tomatoes, oregano, salt, and pepper, cook until heated through, about 5 minutes. Combine cooked pasta, sauce, and ½ cups grated cheese in ovenproof dish. Sprinkle remaining cheese on top. Bake 15-20 minutes at 350 degrees.

BLACK BEAN CASSEROLE

15-ounce can black beans

14-ounce can stewed tomatoes

3 6-inch corn tortillas, quartered

1 cup Jalapeno cheese spread

Combine black beans and stewed tomatoes. In 9x13-inch casserole dish, layer bean mixture with tortillas and cheese. Repeat. Bake at 350 degrees for 20-30 minutes.

Recipe Topics

If you have recipes for topics listed below, please share them with us. We welcome your recipes, but ask that you include accurate measurements, a complete list of ingredients, and clear instructions with each recipe you submit. Be sure to include your name and address. Recipes should reach our office one week before the publishing date listed below.

Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522.

August

12 - Covered Dish Ideas

19 - Garden Vegetables

26 - Sandwiches

September

2 - Beef Contest Entries

9 - National Honey Month