

12 Great Ways to Use...

Tomatoes



Tomatoes are one of the true stars of the Mediterranean diet. Homegrown or sold at your local farmer's market, simply sliced and served with only a sprinkle of salt or a drizzle of olive oil, they are the essence of summer. Fresh—including cherry, grape, and plum varieties—or canned, they're also a versatile staple that partners beautifully with herbs and other vegetables in a wide range of traditional dishes including ratatouille and gazpacho. And of course, tomato sauce and pasta are a match made in heaven. Here are some tasty and easy ways to use them in your kitchen.

- 1.** Slice ripe tomatoes, drizzle with olive oil, and sprinkle with salt and pepper for a juicy summer-time treat. Add mozzarella and torn basil leaves for a caprese salad.
- 2.** Coarsely grate a very ripe tomato, and slather the pulp on top of a halved baguette that's been toasted and rubbed lightly with a garlic clove. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt.
- 3.** Make tomatoes the star of a salad by combining halved cherry or grape tomatoes with shaved shallots, herbs, and your favorite cheese. Toss with a basic vinaigrette and chill until ready to serve.
- 4.** Make homemade salsa with fresh or canned tomatoes, jalapeno (seeded and de-ribbed to your liking), onion, cilantro, a squeeze of lime, and a pinch of salt. Chop the ingredients by hand or in a food processor, and serve with baked whole grain tortilla chips, over a baked potato, or alongside grilled fish.
- 5.** Cook tomato slices in the pan alongside eggs until lightly browned and tender.
- 6.** Toss roughly chopped tomatoes, finely chopped red onion, olive oil, and balsamic vinegar with chunks of day-old bread and let sit at room temperature for about an hour.
- 7.** To make gazpacho, combine fresh or canned tomatoes with tomato juice, onions, bell peppers, salt and pepper in a blender or food processor. Blend to a chunky consistency, then add a splash of red wine vinegar and olive oil.
- 8.** Combine chopped fresh tomatoes with basil and/or oregano, minced garlic, olive oil, salt and pepper. Cook over medium heat until the mixture reaches the consistency of a thick sauce. Serve immediately over pasta, chicken, or on pizza.
- 9.** Tuck sliced, fresh tomatoes into your favorite savory whole wheat tart dough or puff pastry. Sprinkle with chopped fresh herbs, crumbled or grated cheese, and salt and pepper. Bake until the pastry is browned and the tomatoes have cooked through. Slice into larger portions for a lunch, or cut into bite-size pieces for a tasty appetizer.
- 10.** Hollow out a large, ripe tomato, leaving the bottom intact. Chop the tomato flesh and combine with canned tuna or cooked quinoa. Add your favorite flavorings (scallions, herbs, olive oil and vinegar) and stuff the mixture back into the tomato.
- 11.** Thickly slice firm, green tomatoes. Dip slices in a beaten egg and coat with whole wheat panko breadcrumbs. Arrange on a lightly oiled baking sheet and bake at 400°F until golden brown, flipping once.
- 12.** Halve fresh tomatoes and place in a lightly-greased baking dish. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and roast in the oven until shriveled. Cool, then layer on toasted whole wheat bread with lettuce, crisp bacon, and olive oil mayonnaise.

