



Delightful Food Ideas

Delicious Tomatoes Offer Nutritious Flavor

(NAPSA)—Tomatoes are the third-most-popular vegetable eaten by Americans, but there was a time when the delicious vegetable was not well known.

Native to Mexico and South America, this delicious vegetable has been grown and eaten there since the days of the Aztecs. They were brought to Europe by Spanish explorers in the 16th century. However, the plant was used only as an ornamental houseplant.

Not until the 19th century was the tomato widely accepted as food, and even then it was customarily cooked for hours.

Only in the second half of the century were raw or lightly cooked tomatoes consumed by Americans.

That's a good thing, because tomatoes are the leading source of vitamin C in the American diet. They also have a fair supply of vitamin A, which has been said to lower the risk of cancer.

Some medical research indicates that consuming tomatoes may dramatically decrease the risk of heart disease.

Tomatoes are versatile. Cooked or raw, tomatoes pair well with a variety of foods and can be enjoyed year-round.

The following recipe was developed by executive chef Noah Aguilar of The Chef's Table restaurant in Tubac, Ariz., for the Fresh Produce Association of the Americas.



Tomatoes, such as the Roma or plum tomato type, pair well with a variety of foods and can be enjoyed all year long.

Asian Tomato and Cucumber Salad

Serves four

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup sliced Roma tomatoes**
- 2 cucumbers (peeled, seeded and sliced into half-moons)**
- ¼ cup sliced sweet peppers (mixed colors)**
- 3 tablespoons rice wine vinegar**
- ½ teaspoon sesame oil**
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- 1 teaspoon black sesame seeds**
- 1 teaspoon soy sauce**
- ½ teaspoon sugar**

Mix all ingredients together and serve chilled.

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