

Tomatoes—Red, Ripe And Healthy

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(NAPSA)—Once known as *pommes d'amour* or “love apples” in French, tomatoes are today one of America’s favorite foods and a top source of the potent antioxidant lycopene. It’s hard to beat the combination of flavor, versatility, beauty and nutritional punch that tomatoes possess.



Pivonka

Lycopene, a disease-fighting antioxidant, is more readily absorbed from

cooked tomatoes than raw. All tomatoes contain lycopene but cooking the tomatoes breaks down the cell walls and frees the lycopene for the body to absorb. So, wondering what to make for dinner? Chop fresh tomatoes, saute garlic and onions in a little extra-virgin olive oil and cook all together until the juice has evaporated and you have a thick, rich sauce. Stir in some fresh basil and serve over pasta, or spread on pizza.

By including a mix of colorful fruits and vegetables in a low-fat diet, you can help maintain: a healthy heart, memory function, vision health, strong bones and teeth, healthy weight levels, and a lower risk of some cancers. Fruits and vegetables can be divided into five color groups: red, yellow/orange, white, green and blue/purple. Eat at least one serving daily from each group.

California Tomato and Pita Chip Salad is an adaptation of the traditional Middle Eastern toasted bread salad, *fattoush*. It is a perfect blend of flavors and textures, features vegetables from two of the color groups and gives you a great new way to serve fresh California tomatoes. Enjoy fresh tomatoes broiled, grilled, in salads, made into sauces and roasted with other vegetables—the possibilities are endless and delightfully delicious. Look for firm, well-shaped, fragrant, richly colored tomatoes free from blemishes and heavy for their size. Store ripe tomatoes at room temperature and use within a few days. Do not refrigerate.

For more California fresh tomato recipes and information, visit the Web site www.tomato.org; and for more information about



5 A Day The Color Way, visit the Web site www.5aday.com and www.aboutproduce.com.

California Tomato and Pita Chip Salad (Fattoush)

- 4 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tablespoons grated lemon rind
- 4 teaspoons chopped fresh mint
- 1 cup thinly sliced green onions
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 pound romaine lettuce, shredded (about 6 cups)
- 2 to 3 medium fresh California tomatoes, cubed (about 3 cups)
- 1 cucumber, peeled, quartered lengthwise and sliced thin
- 2 whole wheat pitas (6½ inches diameter)

For dressing, combine parsley, lemon rind, mint and green onions with olive oil and salt in small bowl. Mix well and let stand at least 1 hour. Meanwhile, combine romaine, tomatoes and cucumber in a large bowl; set aside to chill. Heat oven to 400°F. Arrange pitas in a single layer on baking sheet. Bake at 400°F for 6 minutes or until toasted. Break into bite-sized pieces and set aside. When ready to serve, add pita chips to salad mixture and toss with dressing. Makes 4 servings (2 cups each).

Nutritional information per serving: calories: 174, total fat: 5.1g, saturated fat: 0.7g, % calories from fat: 24%, protein: 7g, carbohydrates: 30g, cholesterol: 0mg, dietary fiber: 7g, sodium: 342mg