

Tomato Season!

This week, we will explore some delicious recipes featuring a garden staple, tomatoes! Tomatoes are for more than just BLTs! Explore all the different options for this delicious farmers market staple!

The local stands and farmers markets are full of locally grown produce! Make sure to stop in and “shop local” and enjoy the fruits of their labor!

Tomato Bacon Squares

Prep Time: 20 min.

Cook Time: 20 min.

Total Time: 40 min.

Servings: 24

6 slices bacon
1/3 C. chopped green bell pepper
1/3 C. chopped onion
4 Roma (plum) tomatoes, seeded and chopped
1 tsp. dried basil
2 T. mayonnaise
1 clove crushed garlic
1 refrigerated pizza crust dough
3/4 C. shredded Swiss cheese

Preheat oven 350°F.

Place bacon in a large skillet over medium heat. Fry bacon until crisp. Drain on paper towels.

Crumble bacon into a medium-size mixing bowl. Mix in bell pepper, tomatoes, and basil. In a separate small bowl, combine mayonnaise and garlic.

Roll pizza crust into a 12x15 inch rectangular baking sheet. Spread the mayonnaise mixture evenly over the crust. Sprinkle the bacon mixture over the mayonnaise, and top the entire pizza with cheese.

Bake 18 to 20 min. or until the top is bubbly and the crust is golden brown. Cool and cut the pizza into 24 squares.

Best Tomato Pudding

Prep Time: 15 min.

Cook Time: 1 hr.

Total Time: 1 hr. 15 min.

Servings: 6

1/2 C. water
1 (14.25 oz.) can tomato puree
3/4 C. brown sugar
1 T. dried basil
1 pinch salt to taste
10 slices white bread, cubed
1/4 C. butter, melted

In a saucepan over medium heat, stir together the water and tomato puree. Mix in the brown sugar, basil and salt, and bring to a boil. Simmer over low heat for 5 min., then set aside.

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Coat a 2 quart casserole dish with cooking spray.

Place the bread cubes into the dish, and drizzle with melted butter. Pour the tomato sauce over all. Cover with a lid or aluminum foil.

Bake for 1 hour in the preheated oven. Remove the lid for the last 10 min.

Pork Chops with Fresh Tomato

Prep Time: 15 min.

Cook Time: 20 min.

Total Time: 35 min.

Servings: 4

2 T. olive oil, divided
1 lg. onion, halved and thinly sliced
4 pork loin chops, 1 inch thick
salt to taste
black pepper to taste
1 pinch garlic powder to taste
1/2 pint red grape tomatoes, halved
1/2 pint yellow grape tomatoes, halved
3 cloves garlic, diced
1 T. dried basil
2-1/2 tsp. balsamic vinegar
4 oz. feta cheese, crumbled

Heat 1 T. olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Stir in onion and cook until golden brown; transfer onion to a plate and set aside.

Heat 1/2 T. olive oil in the skillet. Season pork chops with salt, pepper, and garlic powder; place in the skillet and cook to desired doneness. An instant-read thermometer inserted into the center should read 145°F. Set aside and keep warm.

Heat remaining olive oil in the skillet; add cooked onion, tomatoes, garlic, and basil. Cook and stir until tomatoes are tender, about 3 min. Mix in balsamic vinegar, and season with salt and pepper.

Top chops with the onion and tomato mixture, and sprinkle with feta cheese to serve.

Watermelon Tomato Salsa

*Prep Time: 25 min.
Additional Time: 4 hrs.
Total Time: 4 hrs. 25 min.
Servings: 6*

1-1/2 C. chopped red onion
1 C. chopped cantaloupe
1 C. chopped watermelon
1 tomato, seeded and chopped
1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and chopped
1/4 C. fresh lime juice
1/4 C. chopped fresh cilantro
salt and pepper to taste

Mix red onion, cantaloupe, watermelon, tomato, jalapeno pepper, lime juice, and cilantro in a large bowl; season with salt and black pepper. Refrigerate at least 4 hours before serving.

Homemade Tomato Sauce

*Prep Time: 30 min.
Cook Time: 4 hrs. 10 min.
Total Time: 4 hrs. 40 min.
Servings: 6*

10 ripe tomatoes
2 T. butter
2 T. olive oil
2 sm. carrots, chopped
1 onion, chopped
1 sm. green bell pepper, chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 C. burgundy red wine
1/4 C. chopped fresh basil
1/4 tsp. Italian seasoning
2 sticks celery
1 bay leaf
2 T. tomato paste

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Prepare a large bowl of ice water.
Plunge whole tomatoes in boiling water until skin starts to peel, about 1 min.
Remove with a slotted spoon and place in ice bath. Let rest until cool enough to handle.
Remove peels, squeeze out seeds and chop 8 tomatoes.
Puree tomatoes in a blender or food processor until smooth. Chop remaining 2 tomatoes and set aside.
Heat butter and oil in a large pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add carrots, onion, bell pepper, and garlic; cook and stir until onion softens, about 5 min.
Pour in pureed tomatoes, then stir in chopped tomatoes, wine, basil, and Italian seasoning. Place celery stalks and bay leaf in the pot and bring to a boil.
Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for 2 hours.
Stir in tomato paste; simmer for an additional 2 hours. Discard celery and bay leaf and serve.

Green Tomato Cake

Servings: 24

4 C. chopped green tomatoes
1 T. salt
1/2 C. butter
2 C. white sugar
2 eggs
2 C. all-purpose flour
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 tsp. ground nutmeg
1 tsp. baking soda
1/4 tsp. salt
1/2 C. raisins
1/2 C. chopped walnuts

Place chopped tomatoes in a bowl and sprinkle with 1 T. salt. Let stand 10 min. Place in a colander, rinse with cold water and drain.
Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 9x13 inch baking pan.
Cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and beat until creamy.
Sift together flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, soda and 1/4 tsp. salt. Add raisins and nuts to dry mixture; add dry ingredients to creamed mixture. Dough will be very stiff. Mix well.
Add drained tomatoes and mix well. Pour into the prepared 9 x 13 inch pan.
Bake for 40 to 45 min. in the preheated oven, or until toothpick inserted into cake comes out clean.

Old-Fashioned Tomato Soup Cake

Prep Time: 10 min.

Cook Time: 30 min.

Servings: 8

1 C. granulated sugar
2 eggs
1/2 C. of butter softened
1 tsp. of vanilla extract
1 (10.75 oz.) can condensed tomato soup – undiluted
1-3/4 C. of all purpose flour
1 tsp. of baking soda
1-1/2 tsp. of cinnamon
1-1/2 tsp. of baking powder
1/2 tsp. of nutmeg
1/4 tsp. of allspice
1 C. of chopped pecans

Frosting Ingredients

8 oz. of cream cheese
1/2 C. of butter softened
1/2 C. of brown sugar
2 C. of powdered sugar
1 tsp. of vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350°. In a bowl, combine softened butter and sugar with a mixer until creamy.

Add eggs one at a time and continue to mix, then add in vanilla extract.

Add tomato soup and mix until it's combined, do not over-mix your batter.

In a separate bowl, whisk together (minus pecans) all dry ingredients.

Gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, mixing until combined, but again, do not over-mix. Fold in pecans.

Pour into two greased 9-inch cake pans and cook for 25 minutes or until the center is done. Once the cake has cooled completely, then you can frost it.

Brown sugar cream cheese frosting: Simply mix all frosting ingredients together with a mixer and then frost cake. You can garnish with extra pecans.

Bursting Cherry Tomato Tart

Prep Time: 15 min.

Cook Time: 1hr.

Total Time: 1 hr. 15 min.

Servings: 8

1 standard pie crust pre- baked in a 10" tart shell
4 oz cream cheese at room temperature
3 scallions sliced
2 T. heavy cream
4 oz goat cheese at room temperature
1/2 tsp. packed fresh thyme leaves
1.5 lbs. cherry tomatoes
1 T. olive oil
6 T. Italian bread crumbs
2 T. melted butter
salt and pepper

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Stir to combine the cream cheese, scallions, heavy cream, goat cheese, and thyme leaves. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Spread this cream cheese mixture evenly over the blind baked tart shell.

Plop the cherry tomatoes on top of the cream cheese and spread them out evenly. You want to make sure to cram as many cherry tomatoes as possible and make sure they're snug and tight, and close together.

Brush the tops of the tomatoes with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake the tart for 40 min.

Remove the tart from the oven. Mix together the Italian bread crumbs and melted butter, and sprinkle it evenly over the top of the tart. Bake the tart for 20 more min., then it's ready to eat.

Quote of the Week:

“Aerodynamically, the bumble bee shouldn't be able to fly, but the bumblebee doesn't know it, so it goes on flying anyway.”

~ Mary Kay Ash