

1052--'Tis The Season – For Tomatoes Camerota's Cupboard August 2013

Some potential benefits of eating tomatoes (from healthmad.com)

1. **Cancer:** Various studies have shown that because of all that lycopene in tomatoes, the red fruit helps to lessen the chances of prostate cancer in men, and also reduces the chance of stomach cancer and colorectal cancer. Lycopene is considered somewhat of a natural miracle anti-oxidant that may help to stop the growth of cancer cells. And, interestingly enough, cooked tomatoes produce more lycopene than do raw tomatoes, so enjoy that tomato soup!
2. **Anti-oxidant:** Tomatoes contain a lot of vitamins A and C, mostly because of beta-carotene, and these vitamins act as anti-oxidants, working to neutralize dangerous free radicals in the blood stream.
3. **Diabetes:** Tomatoes also have plenty of the mineral chromium, which helps diabetics to keep their blood sugar level under control.
4. **Vision:** Because of all that vitamin A, tomatoes are also an excellent food to help improve your vision. This also means tomatoes can help to improve your night vision.
5. **Heart troubles:** Due to potassium and vitamin B, tomatoes help to lower blood pressure and to lower high cholesterol levels. This, in turn, could help prevent strokes, heart attack and other potentially life-threatening heart problems.
6. **Hair:** Remember all that vitamin A in tomatoes? Well, it's good for keeping your hair strong and shiny, and it's also good for your eyes, teeth, skin and bones.
7. **Bones:** Tomatoes have a fair amount of vitamin K and calcium, both of which help to strengthen and possibly repair bones and bone tissue in minor ways.

8. **Kidney stones and gallstones:** Eating tomatoes without the seeds has been shown in some studies to lessen the risk of gallstones and kidney stones.

Read more: <http://healthmad.com/nutrition/10-health-benefits-of-tomatoes/#ixzz2cBgee71y>

Herbed Cucumber and Tomato Salad

(adapted from *The New Prostate Cancer Nutrition Book* by Charles “Snuffy” Myers,” et. al.)

Even though there is more lycopene in cooked tomatoes, all three recipes in this column use fresh tomatoes now in season. This simple salad is best with perfectly ripe tomatoes. In other words, right now. Get thee to a Farmer’s Market!

2 large cucumbers, peeled if waxed, deseeded, and sliced

3-4 large heirloom tomatoes, sliced in wedges

2 slices red onion, halved

8 large fresh basil leaves, torn

½ teaspoon fresh dill, chopped

1½ tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

5 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Sea salt and black pepper, to taste

- Deseed and slice the cucumbers and place them in a large bowl. Fold in wedged tomatoes and sliced onions.
- Sprinkle the fresh herbs, and season with salt and pepper.
- Add the vinegar and olive oil, and toss to mix.

Serves 6

Green and Wax Bean Salad With Spicy Tomato Vinaigrette (adapted from “A Good Appetite” by Melissa Clark in *The New York Times*, 8/7/13)

Have so many tomatoes in the garden that some have gotten overripe? This is a perfect dish because it calls for overripe tomatoes. Wonderful color in this appealing dish.

½ pound green beans, trimmed
½ pound yellow wax beans, trimmed
2 overripe large tomatoes
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar, or to taste
¼ teaspoon kosher sea salt
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 garlic clove, minced
¼ cup thinly sliced pitted kalamata olives
½ cup torn fresh basil leaves

- Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Fill a large bowl with ice and water. Drop green and wax beans into boiling water for 1 to 3 minutes or until just tender. Drain and immediately transfer to the ice bath. When cool, drain and dry with a towel and place in a large bowl.
- Cut tomato in half across its equator and squeeze out seeds (save for another use or discard). Using the largest hole on a box grater, grate the tomato flesh. Discard skin and transfer grated flesh to a medium bowl. Stir in vinegar and salt; then stir in olive oil and garlic. Taste and adjust vinegar and salt as needed.
- Add just enough vinaigrette to coat beans, add olives, then toss well. Let sit for at least 10 minutes (or up to 4 hours) before serving. Add torn basil and serve.

Serves 4

Tomato Salsa with Fruit

(adapted from Mark Bittman's EAT feature in the August 4, 2013, *New York Times Sunday Magazine*., Mark Bittman in turn adapted it from Rick Bayless).

Mark Bittman calls this the best tomato salsa he's ever eaten and gives credit to Rick Bayless. Because of the high praise I've made few changes. I've increased the amount of tomatoes by $\frac{1}{2}$ cup and changed the habanero chili to an equivalent size pepper with your preference for hotness.

1 small red onion, finely chopped

2 tablespoons lime juice

2 cups tomatoes, diced into $\frac{1}{4}$ inch pieces

1 small chili pepper of your choice, seeded, stemmed, and minced

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup chopped cilantro (stems are okay.)

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup chopped ripe mango, peach, nectarine or pear, diced into $\frac{1}{4}$ inch pieces

Salt to taste

- Soak the chopped onion in the lime juice for 20 minutes while you prepare the other ingredients.
- Combine the tomatoes, chili pepper, cilantro, and fruit. When the onion is ready, stir it in, along with a little salt. Add more lime juice if necessary, and serve with poultry or fish.

Yield: About 2 cups.