

Title:

Tasty Tomatoes Add Variety to Meals

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339

Summary:

Today, we look for versatility, variety and convenience in the foods we eat. Tomatoes top the list of versatile foods because they are not only good for you, they complement almost any meal or occasion.

Keywords:

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Article Body:

Today, we look for versatility, variety and convenience in the foods we eat. Tomatoes top the list of versatile foods because they are not only good for you, they complement almost any meal or occasion.

There are more than a dozen varieties of tomatoes. Slices of large, round tomatoes are great on the grill; Roma or plum tomatoes make delicious sauces; and cherry or grape tomatoes make a convenient snack.

Tomatoes' versatility makes them ideal for all eating and entertaining occasions, whether used as an ingredient, an accompaniment or as a stand-alone.

To ensure the best flavor, never refrigerate. The tomato makes an enzyme that produces flavor as it ripens. Once the temperature falls below 55 degrees, it permanently stops producing that enzyme.

Tomatoes are an important dietary source of lycopene, an antioxidant being studied for its ability to keep tissues healthy. Tomatoes also are high in vitamins and fiber - one medium red tomato has 20 percent of the daily requirements of vitamin A, 40 percent of the daily requirements of vitamin C and as much fiber as a slice of whole wheat bread.

This tomato recipe, developed by SunRipe Produce, meets nutritional standards set by Produce for Better Health Foundation.

SUNRIPE BELLA ROMA

DI POMODORO

(Makes 6 servings)

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

3 medium garlic cloves, peeled and thinly sliced

12 Bella Roma Italian-style tomatoes (plum tomatoes), cut into chunks

1/8 teaspoon salt

1/8 teaspoon pepper

1 pound penne pasta

10 basil leaves, torn by hand into small pieces

1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley

In a large skillet, heat olive oil and saute garlic. Add Bella Roma (plum) tomatoes, salt and pepper. Simmer sauce for 10 to 15 minutes; do not overcook the tomatoes. Meanwhile, cook pasta according to package directions. Spoon sauce over pasta and sprinkle with parsley and basil.

Nutritional information per serving: 364 calories, 8.3g total fat, 1.3g saturated fat, 20 percent calories from fat, 3 percent calories from saturated fat, 12g protein, 63g carbohydrates, 0mg cholesterol, 4g dietary fiber, 65mg sodium.

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