

Title:

The Other Side Of Mexican Cooking

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Summary:

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Keywords:

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Article Body:

High-quality bell peppers, summer squash and cucumbers may not have arrived in the farmer's markets yet, but they're crisp, fresh and abundant at the supermarket--and most likely imported from Mexico.

Many people don't realize that Mexico exports far more than just chiles, avocados, tomatoes, limes and other produce you think of as being in Mexican food. Bell peppers in several colors, summer squash in many varieties, and different varieties of cucumbers are just as commonly available from our warm and sunny neighbor to the south.

Mexico has exported high-quality produce to the U.S. for more than 100 years. All Mexican produce undergoes strict quality and safety assurances before it crosses the U.S. border, so you can know it's safe and fresh. Plus, it's healthy: Red, yellow and orange bell peppers are high in beta-carotene and vitamin C. Standard-sized cucumbers are just 39 calories each. And yellow squash and zucchini are an excellent source of magnesium.

Try these vegetables in salads this month, or sliced on sandwiches, or in a stir-fry. You can even use summer squash and red bell peppers in your salsa.

Zucchini & Red Pepper Salsa

2 pounds zucchini (look for small to medium ones)

2 medium red bell peppers, seeded and cut into a small julienne

1/2 cup peeled, seeded and diced cucumber

2 tablespoons finely chopped red onion

2 serrano chiles, seeded and minced

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 tablespoon fresh lime juice

1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste

2 tablespoons chopped cilantro

Trim and dice zucchini, and place in a medium bowl. Add julienne of red pepper, cucumber, red onion and chiles. Dress with olive oil, lime juice and salt, and toss to incorporate. Gently stir in cilantro and serve with yellow or blue tortilla chips, round slices of jicama, or thin slices of French bread. Makes 8 servings.