

Cool Cooking with Red Hot Tomatoes



FAMILY FEATURES

Ketchup may be the first thing you think of when tomatoes are mentioned. But tomatoes are also the main ingredients in many other delicious meals.

“Tomatoes are incredibly versatile, buy them when in season for the best taste and texture,” said Chef Justin Timineri, executive chef and culinary ambassador, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. “When in season, tomatoes are always on the top of my shopping list.”

Find more “Cool Cooking with Red Hot Tomatoes” recipes at <http://bit.ly/fltomatoes>.



Chef Justin Timineri

Tomato Cornbread

Servings: 6 to 10

- 1 box cornbread mix
- 1 Florida onion, diced small
- Olive oil
- Sea salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste
- 1 cup Jack cheese, grated
- 2 large Florida tomatoes, chopped

Follow directions on cornbread box to mix batter. Preheat oven as listed on cornbread box instructions.

Preheat a large cast iron skillet over medium heat. Add diced onion and drizzle of olive oil to cast iron skillet. Season onion with salt and pepper to taste, and cook onion until tender.

Fold half of cheese into cornbread batter. Pour cornbread batter into pan with onions. Add remaining cheese to top of cornbread mixture. Add diced tomatoes to top of cornbread mixture. Bake as directed on box. Remove from oven when golden brown and cooked throughout. Let cool slightly and serve warm.

Kids Can: Pour cornbread batter into pan with adult supervision.

Grown Up Alert: Have an adult help with oven.

Tomatoes on Toast

Servings: 2

- 2 Florida tomatoes
- 4 slices whole-wheat bread
- 2 tablespoons low-fat mayonnaise
- Sea salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste
- 1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese

Remove the core from tomatoes and cut into thin slices. Toast bread slices and assemble open-faced sandwiches by placing 1/2 tablespoon of mayonnaise on each slice of bread. Place tomato slices on top. Sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste. Garnish with Parmesan cheese.

Kids Can: Help place tomatoes on toast and garnish with Parmesan cheese.

Pita Perfect

Servings: 2

- 1 whole-wheat pita pocket
- 2 teaspoons light mayonnaise
- 1/2 Florida tomato, sliced
- 1/2 Florida avocado, sliced
- 2 leaves Florida lettuce
- 4 pieces low-sodium bacon, cooked

Slice pita pocket in half and spread with 1 teaspoon of mayonnaise on the inside of each half. Stuff each pita half with 2 slices tomato, 2 slices avocado, 1 lettuce leaf and 2 slices of bacon.

Kids Can: Help stuff the ingredients into pita pockets.

Grown Up Alert: Adults may need to help slice tomatoes and avocados.

Tomato Basil Soup

Servings: 4 to 6

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 tablespoons garlic, chopped fine
- 5 large fresh Florida tomatoes, chopped
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1/2 cup fresh basil leaves, chopped (save 4 to 6 for garnish)
- 3 cups low sodium vegetable stock
- 1 cup heavy cream
- Sea salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste
- Sour cream for garnish, if desired

Preheat a medium-sized stock pot over medium heat. Add olive oil to preheated pot. Carefully, add onion and garlic. Cook onions and garlic until almost translucent. Add tomatoes, sugar, tomato paste, fresh basil and vegetable stock. Simmer ingredients for at least 20 minutes. Puree soup in blender or with an immersion blender. Be very careful when pureeing hot ingredients. Add cream to soup, and stir to combine. Season soup with salt and pepper to taste. Serve with crusty bread. Garnish with basil leaves and sour cream.

Kids Can: Help add the ingredients to the pot with adult supervision.

Spaghetti with Marinara Sauce

Servings: 8

- 1 large fresh Florida tomato, crushed
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 2 teaspoons dried parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon fresh basil leaves, chopped (save 4 to 6 for garnish)
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
- 1 pound spaghetti
- 1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese

In a large saucepan, combine crushed tomato, tomato sauce, minced garlic, parsley, salt, basil and pepper. Cover. Bring to boil. Lower heat and simmer, with cover, for 30 to 45 minutes.

As end of simmering time nears, cook spaghetti in large pot of boiling salted water until al dente.

Cover spaghetti with marinara sauce. Garnish with basil leaves and Parmesan cheese. Serve warm.

Kids Can: Garnish meal.

Health Benefits — Did You Know?

Florida tomatoes are a good source of lycopene (helps prevent skin damage from UV rays), vitamin C (needed for growth and repair of body tissues) and vitamin A (helps vision and bone growth).

Did You Know?

Botanically, the tomato is a fruit. However, they are legally considered a vegetable after a ruling in the U.S. Supreme Court.

How to Buy

The best test for a great tomato is aroma. Smell the stem end for a strong sweet-acidic fragrance. Choose tomatoes that are plump, shiny and give slight pressure when applied.

How to Store

Tomatoes should be stored at a cool room temperature, out of their packaging and never in the refrigerator. Storing tomatoes in the refrigerator diminishes their flavor.

