

## TOMATOES

Tomatoes are second in popularity only to potatoes in the United States.

### Storage Tips

- Hold tomatoes at room temperature for up to 1 week
- Cut tomatoes deteriorate quickly
- Not fully ripe tomatoes will continue to ripen stored out of the sun at room temperature
- Make sauces, salsas, and purees for winter eating.

### Culinary Tips

- Sauté, bake, broil, grill, or eat them raw
- Slice tomatoes and arrange on a plate. Drizzle with olive oil or a vinaigrette, chopped fresh basil or parsley and salt and pepper.
- Add tomato chunks to summer soups and pasta sauces
- Sauté plum tomatoes and add to an omelet
- Hollow-out partially, stuff and bake or grill
- Roast halved tomatoes on a lightly oiled baking pan in a 250° oven for 3 hours (season with minced garlic and fresh, chopped basil before you pop them in the oven)

### Gazpacho

1/2 cup chopped onion  
2 cloves garlic  
about 6 cups peeled and chopped tomatoes  
2 cucumbers, peeled, seeded and finely chopped  
1 bell pepper, chopped small  
1/2 cup chopped parsley  
1 1/2 cups vegetable juice or tomato juice  
2 teaspoons soy sauce  
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar  
1/4 cup olive oil  
1 teaspoon hot sauce (optional)  
Fresh ground black pepper  
Kosher or sea salt to taste at time of serving

In a non-stick sauté pan, heat oil and sauté onion and garlic for just one or two minutes, enough to soften their bite. Add to a large non-reactive mixing bowl, and combine all the other ingredients and refrigerate for at least 3 to four hours to let flavors meld together. Salt to taste just before serving or let company salt their own servings to taste.

From *Julie A. Ulmer*

### Fried Green Tomatoes with Crispy Cornmeal Crust

1/2 cup mild, or 1 egg beaten with 1/4 cup water  
1/2 cup cornmeal or flour, or a combination  
1 1/4 tsp salt plus more to taste  
1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper plus more to taste  
Mild-flavored vegetable oil

4 large firm green tomatoes, cored, cut into ¼ inch slices

Line a plate with paper towels. Put the milk or the egg-water mixture in a shallow bowl; set aside. Put the cornmeal or the flour in another small, shallow bowl and stir in the salt and pepper.

Fill a large skillet with ¼ inch deep with oil. Heat over high heat until the oil just begins to smoke, about 3 minutes.

Dip each tomato slice into the liquid, then into the cornmeal or flour. Carefully place the tomato slices in the oil and cook until golden and soft (but not mushy), 3 to 4 minutes on each side (working in batches as necessary). Adjust the heat as necessary to prevent burning.

Transfer the fried green tomatoes to the paper towel-lined plate to drain. Season with more salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.

From *Farmer John's Cookbook*