

# TOMATOES

## Nutrition and Health

Tomatoes are an excellent source of vitamin A and are high in vitamin C. They are rich in fiber and add valuable nutrients and antioxidants to the diet. One medium-sized tomato has only 24 calories.

## Selection

Look for clean tomatoes with smooth skins that have no black spots, cracks, splits or other major blemishes. Ripe tomatoes are completely colored red to reddish orange or yellow, depending on the variety. They are firm, but give a little when you squeeze them gently. Avoid buying tomatoes that are too soft or overripe, unless you plan to use them right away for cooking.

## Storage

Cold temperatures cause tomatoes to lose their flavor and change texture. Keep ripe tomatoes at room temperature, 55° to 60°F is ideal. If unripe, place on a counter away from sunlight and heat.

## Preparation

Tomatoes are incredibly versatile and can be stuffed, baked, boiled, stewed, pureed, deviled, glazed, pickled, grilled, fried or eaten raw. Simply wash and cut out the stem end.

Tomatoes can be used whole, sliced or mashed for use in soups, salads and sandwiches.

To broil, cut tomatoes in half, sprinkle with bread crumbs and seasonings and cook for 4 to 5 minutes until heated through.

To bake, cut tomatoes in half (plain, stuffed or with toppings), place in oven at 400°F for 8 to 15 minutes.



## Recipes

### Broiled Tomatoes

4 medium tomatoes  
salt and pepper  
1 cup finely sifted dry bread crumbs, or crushed corn flakes or crackers  
3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese  
½ teaspoon dried herbs: savory, chervil, chives, basil or tarragon

Wash medium tomatoes, ripe or green, and remove stem ends. Cut tomatoes in half and place cut side up in shallow pan or on broiling pan. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Mix bread crumbs, cheese and herbs. Dip each tomato into the breading mix. Bake them at 350°F on a greased sheet until they are nearly soft (about 10 minutes), then broil them under moderate heat until the surface is brown.

### Tomatoes with Rice

1 cup rice  
2 bay leaves  
2 cups water  
½ teaspoon salt  
3 medium tomatoes, chopped  
¼ cup Parmesan cheese, grated

Cook rice and bay leaves, covered in salted water, until rice is tender. Remove bay leaves. Stir in tomatoes. Cook until all liquid is absorbed. Stir in cheese.

### **Baked Parmesan Tomatoes**

4 tomatoes, halved horizontally  
¼ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese  
1 teaspoon chopped fresh oregano  
¼ teaspoon salt  
Freshly ground pepper, to taste  
4 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil

Preheat oven to 450°F.

Place tomatoes, cut side up, on a baking sheet. Top with Parmesan, oregano, salt and pepper.

Drizzle with oil and bake until the tomatoes are tender, about 15 minutes. 4 servings

### **Caprese Salad**

3 ripe tomatoes, sliced thick  
12 ounces fresh mozzarella, sliced thick  
fresh basil leaves  
olive oil  
salt and pepper

Arrange tomato and mozzarella slices on a platter. Top with basil. Drizzle olive oil over salad. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.

### **Pico de Gallo**

1 pound tomatoes (4 plum or 2 large), chopped  
1 jalapeño (seeded for less heat, if desired), finely chopped  
½ red onion, finely chopped  
¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped  
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice  
salt and black pepper

In a medium bowl, combine the tomatoes, jalapeño, onion, cilantro, lime juice. Season with salt and pepper.

### **Alaska Salmon Stuffed Tomatoes**

*(from Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute)*

¼ cup olive oil  
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar or fresh lemon juice  
2 teaspoons Dijon-style mustard  
½ teaspoon salt  
⅛ teaspoon pepper  
2 to 3 large, firm red tomatoes  
1 can (14¾ ounces) or 2 cans (7½ ounces each) traditional-pack Alaska salmon OR 2 cans or pouches (6 to 7.1 ounces each) skinless, boneless salmon, drained and chunked  
1 medium-size, ripe avocado, diced  
2 tablespoons chopped cilantro or parsley

*Dressing:* In small bowl, whisk olive oil, white wine vinegar or lemon juice, mustard, salt, and pepper.

*Salad:* Cut tomatoes in half crosswise; scoop out and discard flesh and seeds.

In separate bowl, combine salmon, avocado, and cilantro or parsley.

Drizzle on dressing; toss lightly. Spoon salmon mixture into tomato halves.

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