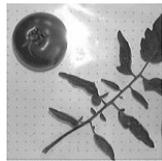


Tomato Primer

Purple Cherokee Tomatoes

The Purple Cherokee is an heirloom tomato, with its history thought to go back to Indigenous Americans before 1890. It is an indeterminate plant that produces large tomatoes, some weighing more than a half-pound. These tomatoes are a dusty red brick color when ripe. The Purple Cherokee has a sweet, smooth, smoky flavor contained inside its thick skin. These plants are hardy and easy to grow for beginning gardeners.



Heinz Tomatoes

Ever wonder where Heinz ketchup started? It was one of the seed varieties of Heinz tomatoes. This heirloom tomato has a rich, classic tomato flavor. The Heinz is a determinate plant offering a good supply of summer tomatoes. You know when the fruit is ready due to its bright red color. These plants do well in a deep container and can make great first tomato plants for new growers. Now that you are growing the foundation of Heinz ketchup, why not make your own?



Brandywine Tomatoes

Dating back more than 200 years, the Brandywine tomato is thought to have been grown first by the Amish. This heirloom tomato is an indeterminate that can grow over eight feet, if allowed. These tomatoes are large in size, usually tipping the scales at one pound. They are ripe when they are pink-red. One plant, if cultivated correctly, can grow more than 100 pounds of tomatoes in a season. Brandywines give you a rich, creamy, old time tomato flavor that is great on salads, sliced and grilled or combined with onions to make a farm-fresh tart.



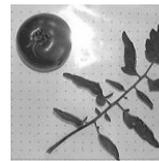
Sungold Tomatoes

Sungold tomatoes are a cherry tomato with one of the sweetest flavors you'll find. Introduce this sweet fruit to kids and you may find they have a new favorite snack. This is an indeterminate plant, some growing over 10 feet, producing bunches of tomatoes (10-15) on grapelike trusses. You can place this plant in a container as long as you give it space and a good support system. These tomatoes are a great addition to your salad. You can pick them and eat them right off the vine for a sweet treat. Or, you can create a tasteful summertime pasta dish.

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Tomatillos

A green, tomato-shaped vegetable covered by a papery husk, tomatillos are native to Central America and provides a tart, spicy flavor to foods. They are the main ingredient in salsa verde. Tomatillos are a good source of Vitamin C, potassium and fiber.

Easy No-cook Salsa

Mix together:

Serve immediately or refrigerate for use within one week.

- 1 C chopped fresh garden tomatoes
- 6 tomatillos, chopped
- 1 green tomato, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 green pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 red pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and chopped
- 1/4 C fresh cilantro, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 C raw zucchini, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste

Oven-roasted Tomatoes for Freezing

Too many tomatoes and no time to can them? Here's an easy solution.

- Ripe tomatoes, any variety, sliced (cut cherry tomatoes in half)
- Olive Oil
- Fresh herbs, for example, basil, sage, rosemary or parsley
- Salt to taste

Toss the sliced tomatoes in just enough olive oil to coat them. Mix with finely chopped fresh herbs, if desired. Salt to taste—or not if you restrict salt in your diet.

Spread the tomato slices on a baking sheet (not on top of each other). Bake at 350° for about one hour, or until they appear slightly caramelized. Let cool a bit before using a spatula to scoop them into plastic freezer bags. Press flat and freeze. These will stay fresh for at least six months, if they last that long! Use them on pasta, bruschetta or as a base for tomato sauce.



Our Kitchen Table is a non-profit, grassroots community activist organization working for environmental justice and food security in Grand Rapids area urban communities.

OKTjustice.org OKTable1@gmail.com



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