

Let's Talk Tomatoes



How to Select and Store Tomatoes

There are thousands of different varieties of tomatoes and when you are choosing a tomato look for those with a deep rich color because this is one of the signs indicative of a delicious tomato. The rich color also indicates that the tomato has a greater supply of the health-promoting phytonutrient red pigment, lycopene.

A puffy appearance indicates that the tomato will be of inferior flavor and cause excess waste during preparation. Ripe tomatoes will yield to slight pressure and it will have a noticeably sweet fragrance.

Tomatoes are sensitive to cold so it is important to never store fresh tomatoes in a temperature below 55°F/13°C. The enzyme the tomato produces as it ripens stops producing any additional flavor permanently in the cold, and the longer the tomato is kept in the cold the flavor that has already developed will degrade.

To hasten the ripening process, place them in a paper bag with a banana or apple. If the tomatoes begin to become overripe and you don't wish to use them yet, place them in the refrigerator (if possible in the butter compartment, which is warmer). Bring to room temperature before eating to regain their maximum flavor and juiciness; this should take approximately 30 minutes.

Whole tomatoes, chopped tomatoes and tomato sauce freeze well for future use in cooked dishes.

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