



Newsletter

July 5, 2013
Volume 1 Issue 2

The Roasted Tomato, 320 Greentree Drive, East Stroudsburg PA 18301
www.roastedtomatodiner.com, sales@poconobudgetinn.com, 570.424.5451

What is a Tomato?

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1** What is a Tomato?
- 1** Tomatoes Around the World
- 2** Tomato Contest
- 4** Tomato Producers

A tomato is the edible, often red fruit from the plant *Solanum lycopersicum*, commonly known as a tomato plant. Both the species and its use as a food originated in Mexico, and spread around the world following the Spanish colonization of the Americas. Its many varieties are now widely grown, sometimes in greenhouses in cooler climates.

The tomato is consumed in diverse ways, including raw, as an ingredient in many dishes, sauces, salads, and drinks. While it is botanically a fruit, it is considered a vegetable for culinary purposes (as well as by the United States Supreme Court, see *Nix v. Hedden*), which has caused some confusion. The fruit is rich in lycopene, which has health effects.

The tomato belongs to the nightshade family. The plants typically grow to 1-3 meters (3-10 ft) in height and have a weak stem that often sprawls over the ground and vines over other plants.

Please see *What is a Tomato* on page 2

"It's difficult to think anything but pleasant thoughts while eating a homegrown tomato."

- Lewis Grizzard

Tomatoes Around the World

Mesoamerica

Aztecs and other peoples in Mesoamerica used the fruit in their cooking. The exact date of domestication is unknown: by 500 BC, it was already being cultivated in southern Mexico and probably other areas. The Pueblo people are thought to have believed that those who witnessed the ingestion of tomato seeds were blessed with powers of divination. The large, lumpy tomato, a mutation from a smoother, smaller fruit, originated in Mesoamerica, and may be the direct ancestor of some modern cultivated tomatoes.

Please see *Tomatoes Around the World* on page 3

Tomato contest

Tell us about your tomatoes!!

Email your favorite tomato recipe throughout the month of July.

Voting will take place in August; if your recipe is chosen, it will be part of our features for the entire month of September!

And don't forget to send us pictures of your tomato garden, tomato dishes, tomato EVERYTHING! We would love to see them and to make you part of our tomato family! All pictures and recipe submissions need to be emailed to the following:

sales@poconobudgetinn.com

The last day to enter your recipe will be July 31, 2013 by 5:00 pm. Voting will begin on August 1, 2013.

What is a Tomato page 1

It is a perennial in its native habitat, although often grown outdoors in temperate climates as an annual. An average common tomato weighs 102-105 grams.

The tomato is now grown worldwide for its edible fruits, with thousands of cultivars having been selected with varying fruit types, and for optimum growth in differing growing conditions. Cultivated tomatoes vary in size, from tomatillos, about 5 mm in diameter, through cherry tomatoes, about the same 1-2 cm (0.4-0.8 in) size as the wild tomato, up to beefsteak tomatoes 10 cm (4 in) or more in diameter. Tomatoes are one of the most common garden fruits in the United States and, along with zucchini, have a reputation for out producing the needs of the grower.

Quite a few seed merchants and banks provide a large selection of heirloom seeds. The definition of an heirloom tomato is vague, but unlike commercial hybrids, all are self-pollinators that have bred true for 40 years or more.

About 150 million tons of tomatoes were produced in the world in 2009. China, the largest producer, accounted for about one quarter of the global output, followed by United States and India. For one variety, plum or processing tomatoes, California accounts for 90% of U.S. production and 35% of world production.

**"You say tomato,
I say tomathto!"**



*Always Fresh...
Always Homemade!*

Tomatoes Around the World from page 1

Spanish distribution

Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés may have been the first to transfer the small yellow tomato to Europe after he captured the Aztec city of Tenochtitlán, now Mexico City, in 1521, although Christopher Columbus, a Genoese working for the Spanish monarchy, may have taken them back as early as 1493. The earliest discussion of the tomato in European literature appeared in an herbal written in 1544 by Pietro Andrea Mattioli, an Italian physician and botanist, who suggested that a new type of eggplant had been brought to Italy that was blood red or golden color when mature and could be divided into segments and eaten like an eggplant—that is, cooked and seasoned with salt, black pepper, and oil. However it wasn't until ten years later that tomatoes were named in print by Mattioli as *pomi d'oro*, or "golden apple".

Italy

The recorded history of tomatoes in Italy dates back to October 31, 1548 when the house steward of Cosimo de' Medici, the grand duke of Tuscany, wrote to the Medici private secretary informing him that the basket of tomatoes sent from the grand duke's Florentine estate at Torre del Gallo "had arrived safely." Tomatoes were grown mainly as ornamentals early on after their arrival in Italy. For example, the Florentine aristocrat Giovanvettorio Soderini wrote how they "were to be sought only for their beauty" and were grown only in gardens or flower beds. The tomato's ability to mutate and create new and different varieties helped contribute to its success and spread throughout Italy. However, even in areas where the climate supported growing tomatoes, their proximity of growing to the ground suggested low status. They were not adopted as a staple of the peasant population because they were not as filling as other fruits already available. Additionally, both toxic and inedible varieties discouraged many people from attempting to consume or prepare them.

Britain

Tomatoes were not grown in England until the 1590s. One of the earliest cultivators was John Gerard, a barber-surgeon. Gerard's *Herbal*, published in 1597, and largely plagiarized from continental sources, is also one of the earliest discussions of the tomato in England. Gerard knew the tomato was eaten in Spain and Italy. Nonetheless, he believed it was poisonous (in fact, the plant and raw fruit do have low levels of tomatine, but are not generally dangerous). Gerard's views were influential, and the tomato was considered unfit for eating (though not necessarily poisonous) for many years in Britain and its North American colonies. By the mid-18th century, tomatoes were widely eaten in Britain, and before the end of that century, the *Encyclopædia Britannica* stated the tomato was "in daily use" in soups, broths, and as a garnish.

Asia

The tomato was introduced to cultivation in the Middle East/Asia by John Barker, British consul in Aleppo *circa* 1799 to 1825. Nineteenth century descriptions of its consumption are uniformly as an ingredient in a cooked dish. In 1881, it is described as only eaten in the region "within the last forty years".

Tomato Producers

Top Ten Tomato Producers - 2010 (in tonnes)	
 China	41,879,684
 United States	12,902,000
 India	11,979,700
 Turkey	10,052,000
 Egypt	8,544,990
 Italy	6,024,800
 Iran	5,256,110
 Spain	4,312,700
 Brazil	4,114,310
 Mexico	2,997,640
World Total	145,751,507

** The tonne (SI symbol: t) is a metric system unit of mass equal to 1,000 kilograms (2,204.6 pounds) or 1 megagram (1 Mg). It is a non-SI unit accepted for use with SI. To avoid confusion with the much smaller short ton and the slightly larger long ton, it is also known as a metric ton in the United States. **

American habits: According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Americans eat between 22- 24 pounds of tomatoes per person, per year. (More than half of those munchies are ketchup and tomato sauce.)

Popularity: The tomato is America's fourth most popular fresh-market vegetable behind potatoes, lettuce, and onions.

Increasing popularity: Americans have increased their tomato consumption 30% over the last 20 years (mostly in processed forms such as sauce, paste, and salsa).

Toxic? While tomatoes are perfectly safe and healthy to eat, their leaves are actually toxic!

How will you take your tomatoes? As of 2007, Americans spend more on salsa than tomato ketchup.

Processed tomatoes: Americans consume three-fourths of their tomatoes in processed form.

The average Joe: 93% American gardening households grow tomatoes.

Fresh tomatoes: Fresh-market tomatoes are grown in all 50 states.

Biggest worldwide producers: The largest worldwide producer of tomatoes is China, followed by USA, Turkey, India and Egypt.

Biggest U.S. producer - processed tomatoes: California produces 96% of the tomatoes processed in the U.S.

Biggest U.S. producer - fresh tomatoes: Florida is the number one producer of fresh market tomatoes (except in 2008).

The Roasted Tomato Diner

320 Greentree Drive
East Stroudsburg PA 18301

Phone:
570.424.5451

Fax:
570.424.0389

E-mail:
sales@poconobudgetinn.com