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TASTY TIPS FOR TOMATOES

TOMATOES are a help in almost any meal—with bacon or sausages for breakfast; for luncheon dishes with grated cheese or eggs or fish; for cocktails or just plain juice before dinner and in soups and savouries, and as a vegetable; and in jams and preserves for tea. Don't forget when making the refreshing tomato sandwich, to add a little finely-chopped mint and a pinch of sugar; and try, too, a little finely-chopped preserved ginger sprinkled over the tomato, and just a wee dash of salt. Always peel the tomatoes; just put them in boiling water for a few minutes; it is embarrassing to have bits of tomato-skin to dispose of at a tea-party.

A week or two ago I gave directions for bottling tomatoes; so that we should have plenty all through the winter. I hope you have plenty of "pulped" tomatoes, also; you will find the puree very useful for soups and sauces.

Cream of Tomato Soup

This is an English recipe and very simple. It really needs a good "nut" of butter stirring in just before serving. Cook 5 or 6 medium-sized potatoes with a large chopped onion and a sprig or two of parsley and mint. Strain off the water when done, and save it. Remove the herbs. Rub the potatoes and onion through a sieve. Add a cupful of the saved potato water to this puree, then a cupful of good rich milk. Mix well, then add a cupful of cold tomato-pulp or puree. If more is needed, add milk, potato water and tomato puree in proportion. Heat and serve, without boiling.

Tomato Baskets (with oysters)

Cut the tops off some smooth round tomatoes. Scoop out a little of the pulp and bake the tomatoes till tender. Meanwhile, make about a teacup of good white sauce, using a little oyster liquor, to flavour. Scald and beard sufficient oysters and cut them into dice; then stir them into the sauce. Take the cooked tomatoes from the oven, and fill with the oyster mixture. Sprinkle crisp chopped bacon on the top. Arrange "handles" for the tomato-baskets with parsley stalks; place each on a crouton of fried bread and serve very hot.

Mock Lobster (for sandwiches or savouries)

Four medium-sized tomatoes; 1 onion; 1 cup soft breadcrumbs; 1 egg; about 3oz. grated cheese; 1 tablespoon butter; pepper and salt to taste. Peel and slice tomatoes and grate the onion. Put on to cook in the butter. When quite soft add the beaten egg and cook for a few minutes. Then add the grated cheese and breadcrumbs, stirring in carefully but not cooking any more—have the saucepan off the stove to do this. Add pepper and salt to taste.

Eggs Baked in Tomatoes

Cut off top of tomato and scoop out most of the pulp. Sprinkle the inside with pepper and salt (celery salt is

good). Break an egg carefully into the tomato and replace the chopped pulp on top of it. Cover with buttered paper and place in pan or dish. Bake in a moderate oven about 30 minutes, or until the tomato is cooked and the egg set.

With bacon. Remove the paper after about 15 minutes, and lay a small strip of bacon on instead.

Tomato Fish Cups

Scoop out the centre of some large firm tomatoes. Mix this pulp with cold cooked fish, flaked finely, and some breadcrumbs, and bind the mixture with a beaten egg. A little chopped parsley can always be added with advantage to any stuffing. Fill the tomato cups with this mixture, piling plenty in, and press a piece of butter into the middle of each. Arrange them in a buttered casserole, cover each one with a rasher of bacon, and cook in a moderate oven till all is nicely done, and the bacon crisp.

Tomato Savoury Dish

This is excellent. Butter a casserole fairly thickly, sides as well as bottom, and cover with fresh breadcrumbs. Then put a layer of sliced tomatoes, cover with a layer of sliced apples, and then a good sprinkling of grated onion. Season with pepper and salt to taste. Repeat the three layers until the dish is full, finishing with a layer of tomatoes. Cover all with a generous layer of breadcrumbs, and dot with several small pieces of butter. Bake in a moderate oven about an hour. As a variation, thin slices of cheese may be used to form one layer in the middle of the dish, and rashers of bacon laid on the top instead of the butter.

Tomato Rarebit

Half a cup of soft breadcrumbs; ½lb. grated cheese; 1 cupful of cooked and sieved tomatoes; ¼ teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon pepper. Place all together in small saucepan and cook until smooth, stirring constantly. Serve hot on hot toasted bread.

Stuffed Tomatoes

Chop very finely a cupful of cold cooked ham or tongue, and season it with salt, pepper, a little chopped celery and onion. Add half the quantity of fine breadcrumbs, and mix the whole with a little vinegar and sugar to taste. Cut off the top of the tomatoes and scoop out the pulp; mix this with the rest, and put it all back into the tomato shells. Garnish with lettuce leaves and parsley, and serve with mayonnaise.

Tomato Filling for Sandwiches

Simmer 6 large skinned and sliced tomatoes and a small finely chopped onion in a pan with a small piece of butter, until cooked. Then add 1 beaten egg, 4 teaspoons of breadcrumbs, 2 tablespoons of grated cheese, and pepper and salt. Stir well and press into small glass jars. Seal with melted paraffin wax and cover. Makes a wonderful sandwich spread, or for small savoury biscuits.