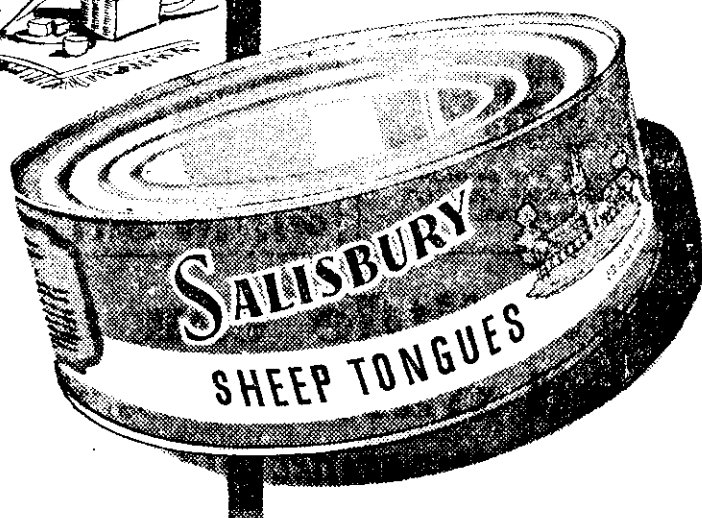




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Ask Aunt Daisy

Tomatoes a Fine Stand-by



TOMATOES are certainly a great stand-by for the busy housewife who likes to have ready an appetising meal for her family, irrespective of all the other millions of things she has crowded into her interesting day. For sandwiches and in salads, for savoury dishes, or stuffed with a variety of appetising and satisfying fillings—and even for taking inkstains out of the school blouses—the tomato is her friend. To vary the sandwiches try a sprinkling of very finely chopped mint on some of them, and a grating of onion on others; pepper and salt, of course. Don't forget to skin the tomatoes, either, and to cut out that hard core, for both are embarrassing to encounter in a sandwich. The skin peels off so easily if the tomato is just dipped in boiling water for about half a minute, or even held over steam.

Tomato Soup

Cut up about 2 lb. tomatoes and let them cook in their own juice gently for about 20 minutes. Then press through a colander and add this to an equal quantity of hot milk in saucepan. Do not let it boil, but just heat gently, adding pepper and salt to taste and a knob of butter. A grating of onion may be added and a pinch of powdered cloves. Thicken as desired.

Cream of Tomato Soup

Slice 1 lb. tomatoes and small onion. Cook slowly in a little butter till tomatoes are soft and mushy. Add pinch of baking soda and put through sieve. To every pint of tomato pulp allow 1½ pints of milk. Bring milk to boil and thicken with flat dessertspoon of corn-flour moistened with a little cold milk. When boiling, slowly add tomato pulp. Season to taste with pepper, salt and a little sugar, and serve with sippets of toast. Half a cup of cream added is an improvement.

As Steak Accompaniment

This is the tastiest way to serve tomatoes with grilled steak. Cut them in half crosswise (dig out the bit of core neatly if you can), sprinkle each half with a little sugar, about ½ teaspoon of vinegar, and top with a knob of butter. Arrange in rows in baking tin or casserole, and bake near top of hot oven till skins are crinkly—about ½ hour. Or you can do them under the grill. But baked in a glass oven dish they need no dishing up, but are ready to be placed on the table—after lightly sprinkling with very finely chopped mint. These are really lovely as a luncheon dish without meat—just with cheese and biscuits.

Tomato Savoury

This is a popular dish—very easy to prepare and baked in a moderate oven about 30 to 40 minutes. The basis is a buttered pie-dish lined with slices of raw (skinned) tomatoes. Next put layer of thin slices of onion, then layer of thin slices of cheese, layer of apple, and then good layer of breadcrumbs. Pepper and salt as desired. Now repeat these layers until dish is full, having breadcrumbs on top, and either knobs of butter or strips of bacon, which do make it extra nice. You can ring the changes on these layers, making a different little pie

each time. You can leave out the cheese and put small pieces of cooked bacon in the middle; or leave out the apple. The main idea is slices of tomato, of onion, and of breadcrumbs. Most people pour about about ½ cup of water over before putting in the oven.

Tomato Juice

Cut tomatoes into slices or pieces and put into saucepan with hardly any water. Cook on low heat, stirring frequently till very soft and pulpy. Strain carefully, add salt and sugar to taste, and make very cold before serving. To bottle the juice, bring it to the boil again after straining, fill into heated sterilised bottles to overflowing, and seal airtight immediately.

Fruit-filled Tomatoes

Scoop out large tomatoes, mix pulp with some ripe banana mashed to pulp, a little grated apple, and tablespoon of mayonnaise. Fill tomatoes with this mixture. Lay a few capers on top. Serve on dish with lettuce or cress, and sliced hard boiled eggs.

Tomatoes (For Lunch)

These are dainty-looking lunches, and quite substantial enough in hot weather. Eaten with one of the popular rye crisp-breads, and with a cup of good coffee afterwards, a very good, non-fattening meal. Cut thick slice off the stem and scoop out most of the pulp. Sprinkle tomato-shell with pepper and salt to taste, and fill with chopped cucumber. Mix scooped-out pulp with a little mayonnaise and pile on top, and serve them on lettuce leaves with sliced cooked new potatoes and cold green peas heaped around and mayonnaise to taste. Or use cream cheese mashed up with chopped spring onions to fill tomato-shell and cover with scooped-out pulp, with or without mayonnaise to bind it.

Or mix scooped-out pulp with chopped celery and spring onions, adding a little finely chopped mint, and mix all with a little mayonnaise or dressing, as preferred. Pile and pack into tomato-shells, place sardines crosswise on top, or strips of cheese; surround with slices of cucumber and cold peas, standing each tomato in a crisp lettuce leaf.

Tomato Paste (No Breadcrumbs)

Half a pound of tomatoes, 1 oz. processed cheese, 1 oz. butter, 1 egg, pepper and salt. Skin tomatoes, mash, add butter, and cook. Add cheese, beaten egg, and seasoning. Cook till thick in double saucepan. Do not boil. Put into small pots.

Tomato Spread

Simmer 6 large skinned tomatoes and small finely chopped onion in pan with a small piece of butter, until cooked. Then add 1 beaten egg, tablespoon of breadcrumbs, 2 tablespoons of grated cheese, 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.

Next week, tomato sauces and chutney.

N.Z. LISTENER, FEBRUARY 25, 1955.