

Recipe: Puttanesca Tomato Salad

For me there's something nostalgic about homegrown tomatoes. This time of year, when bright red, orange and purple softball-size tomatoes are overflowing in the farmers' markets and our garden, I always think of my grandpa.

I remember so clearly as a kid watching him sitting on a picnic bench in the shade of the big oak tree cutting into a red ripe tomato. It was just picked, still warm from the sun. He didn't have a plate, or fork, just his pocket knife. He'd cut big slices with juices dripping everywhere and all the grandkids would be sitting eagerly waiting for our piece of summery heaven.



If you have August tomatoes like Grandpa's, you don't need any recipe. But tomatoes and olives are classic together and this beautiful dish dresses up those tomatoes for special summer dinner parties. Depending on the size of the tomatoes, this recipe serves up 6 generous side portions with more for seconds or left overs. I used rose heirloom tomatoes from Barry and Carol at Savoie Organic Farms at Headhouse Farmers' Market. They were amazing!

-- Lindsay Lidge

Puttanesca Tomato Salad

1 cup good balsamic vinegar
1 cup olives (I like to use a few different colors)
2 tablespoons capers
1/4 cup chopped parsley
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus a little more to drizzle
3 good size tomatoes
Freshly ground black pepper

In a small sauce pan over low heat, simmer the balsamic until it's thick and syrupy. Set aside to cool slightly. Rough chop olives and stir together in a bowl with capers, parsley and olive oil. Cut tomatoes into thick slices and arrange on a big platter. Top with olive and caper mixture. Then drizzle just a little more olive oil and the balsamic reduction and finish with a few grinds of the pepper mill.

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