

Fresh Tomato Salsa

2 lbs tomatoes
3 jalapeno peppers
1 banana pepper
1 red onion
4 cloves garlic
1/2 cup cilantro leaves and stems
salt and pepper
1/4 cup olive oil

Core and chop the tomatoes. Place them in a pot and fill with enough water to almost cover the tomatoes. Place on the stove and cook at a rapid boil for 15 minutes.

In the meantime, roast the jalapeno and banana peppers in a dry skillet until charred on all sides, and then place in a bowl and cover completely with plastic wrap. Allow the peppers to steam for 10 minutes.

Cut the onion in 1 1/2 inch wide strips. Griddle or grill the onions until slightly charred and tender. Rough chop the garlic and place in the blender with the cilantro.

Add the boiled down tomatoes, the onion, and peel the skins off the peppers, discard the bell pepper seeds and skins, adding the peeled peppers and jalapeno seeds to the blender. Season with salt and pepper and blend thoroughly. Remember the tomatoes are extremely hot, so start the blender off on a low speed.

Heat a large skillet on high heat with the oil. Once the pan is very hot, pour the salsa into the pan. Back away as the salsa will splatter, and allow to cook for 20 seconds before cutting the heat. This is an essential step in creating an authentic Mexican salsa although it gets a little messy. It helps develop a rich, complex flavor. Now cool down the salsa and store in the refrigerator until you're ready to use it.

Recipe By Garden Chef Julia LeRoy



ATLANTA BOTANICAL GARDEN