

Salsa Is Good For You

When you think of condiments, what comes to mind? Ketchup, mustard and other condiments that have been in American culture for a very long time. Recently, with globalization and the immigration of foreigners to America, we have seen and tasted foods from all over the world. Salsa is quickly becoming the most popular condiment in the United States. According to sales records, salsa is taking over the top spot from ketchup. Unlike ketchup, salsa is easily made at home and offers a variety of ingredients and variations. You can increasingly see salsa being used on a variety of foods. It's successfully integrated its way into American foods. The other day, I saw somebody adding it to their baked potato.

Although tomatoes are the main ingredient of salsa, many times, you'll see salsa without tomatoes. Fruit salsa (mango salsa) is becoming a very popular alternative to the traditional tomato salsa. Originally used strictly with Mexican food (salsa means sauce in Spanish), salsa is now being used with such things as eggs, potatoes, burgers and other foods. Since salsa is so easy to make, you can have many types of fresh salsa in your refrigerator at all times. If you like especially spicy food, you can add extra spice to your recipe. Certain cultures that enjoy spicy food (Indian) also enjoy making and using homemade salsa. Even cultures that aren't used to spicy food (Japanese) enjoy using salsa (although, a milder version of salsa) with their dishes.

Now, let's turn to the healthy aspect of salsa. With so much flavor, it's hard to believe that salsa is actually very healthy for you. Salsa adds an extra serving of fruits or vegetables. The only downside of eating store salsa is that they are typically high in sodium (not high in fat). When you make salsa at home, there is nothing unhealthy about it. A tablespoon of a condiment, whether ketchup or salsa, cannot supply a very large amount of nutrients, no matter what the ingredients.

But in larger portions, the various vegetables and fruits in salsa can supply a wide range of antioxidant vitamins, natural phytochemicals (such as lycopene in tomatoes), and the mineral potassium that is in such short supply in our diets. Also, researchers have identified a compound in cilantro, a key flavor component of salsa and a variety of other dishes, that kills harmful Salmonella bacteria and shows promise as a safe, natural food additive that could help prevent foodborne illness, according to a joint study by U.S. and Mexican researchers.

The compound -- dodecenal -- was isolated from the fresh leaves of cilantro, or coriander, one of the main ingredients found in salsa, along with tomatoes, onions and green chilies. The compound also is found in the seeds of cilantro. Both leaves and seeds contain about the same amount of dodecenal, but the leaves are used more abundantly in salsa.

Basically, who doesn't love salsa? So, the next time you think of reaching for the ketchup, think about grabbing some salsa instead. Before you know it, salsa will be served with everything.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

About the Author

Michael K. Sasaki is the founder of RecipeMatcher - <http://www.recipematcher.com>, where you can find delicious salsa recipes, crock pot recipes, barbecue recipes and many more.