

One seasoning provides a year-round
solution *for flavorless tomatoes*

A Fresh Tomato Salad for All Seasons



In a tomato salad, sumac acts like salt, enhancing the tomato's sweetness.

And generations of cooks in Kassiss' family have used it to spice variations of the tomato, herb and onion salad.

That salad is usually prepared only in summer, when tomatoes are at their best. But we found that using substantially more sumac than is traditional—and in two ways—could elevate the flavor even of standard-issue grocery store tomatoes.

For the dressing, we combined 3 teaspoons of sumac with a simple vinaigrette of lemon juice and olive oil. For deeper flavor, we also added blanched garlic cloves mashed to a paste; the blanching takes just a minute and mellows garlic's raw bite.

Rather than delicate slices, we opted for cutting the tomatoes into wedges, which held their shape better and resulted in a more robust salad. Sliced onion, which we soaked in lemon juice to temper its harsh flavor, added a crisp texture and slightly pickled flavor. Liberal use of chopped dill, parsley and mint provided freshness.

A final sprinkling of sumac highlighted the tartness of the dressing, and a touch of flaky sea salt added a bit of crunch and bolstered the other flavors. This deceptively simple salad ended up a contrast of textures and flavors, with the tart sumac balancing and highlighting the sweetness of the tomatoes, no matter the season.

Tomato-Herb Salad with Sumac

Start to finish: 35 minutes | Servings: 4

IN-SEASON TOMATOES are best in this salad, but the abundance of fresh herbs and sumac will bring out the sweetness even in bland winter

supermarket tomatoes. For added color and flavor contrast, add diced or coarsely crumbled feta cheese.

Don't use the onion without first soaking it in lemon juice. This tames its bite. Likewise, don't use the garlic raw—blanching the cloves for a minute mellows their pungency.

—SANDRA ROSE GLUCK

1 small red onion, halved and thinly sliced

6 tablespoons lemon juice, divided

4 medium garlic cloves, peeled

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

4 teaspoons ground sumac, divided

Kosher salt

2 pounds plum tomatoes, cored and cut into 4 or 6 wedges

½ cup lightly packed fresh flat-leaf parsley

⅓ cup roughly chopped fresh dill

⅓ cup lightly packed fresh mint, torn

▪ **In a small bowl**, stir together the onion and 2 tablespoons of the lemon juice. Let stand for 20 minutes. Meanwhile, bring a small saucepan of water to a boil. Add the garlic, cook for 1 minute, then drain. Finely chop the garlic, then use the flat side of a chef's knife to mash it to a coarse paste. Transfer to a small bowl and whisk in the remaining 4 tablespoons lemon juice, the oil, 3 teaspoons of the sumac and ¾ teaspoon salt.

▪ **Put the tomatoes in a large bowl** and sprinkle with ¼ teaspoon salt. Drain the onion, pat dry and add to the tomatoes, along with the parsley, dill and mint. Drizzle the garlic mixture over the salad and gently toss. Transfer to a platter and sprinkle with the remaining 1 teaspoon sumac. ♦